maximum rocknroll

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$4 US & CANADA

FEATURING :

BEST RECORDS OF 2007

AUTISTIC YOUTH

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KARMA SUTRA

CLUSTERFUCK

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SLAUGHTER OF THE INNOCENT

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL
PO BOX 460760
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94146-0760

Phone (415) 923-9814
Fax (415) 923-9617

www.maximumrocknroll.com
mrr@maximumrocknroll.com

TOP 10

For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

JUSTIN BRIGGS

- INSTÄNGD-Mitt Svar På Ingenting-EP
- WALLS-LP
- LES VANDALES-Loup-Garou-EP
- NEEDLES-Twisted Vision-EP & Live
- REPERCUSSIONS-No Peace-EP
- LOS MONJO-Cerdos-EP
- UGLY LAW-Good Life-EP
- BASTARD SONS OF APOCALYPSE-LP
- SACRED SHOCK-Deadlines-EP
- LAMPS-Tim Ford/Cowboy-45

TIM BROOKS

- LOS MONJO-Cerdos-EP
- BAADER BRAINS-LP
- BASTARD SONS OF APOCALYPSE-LP
- BORN BAD-Moron Music-EP
- SICK FIX-Junkie Fever-EP
- NEEDLES-Twisted Vision-EP
- REPERCUSSIONS-No Peace-EP
- THE ARRIVALS/THE BROKEDOWNS-split-EP
- VICIOUS CYCLE-Neon Electric-EP
- INSOMNIO-No Escape-LP

MITCH CARDWELL

- LAMPS-Tim Ford/Cowboy-45
- BETTER BEATLES-Mercy Beat-LP
- KING KHAN & BBQ SHOW-Teabag Party-EP
- DICTATORS-Every Day Is Saturday-2xLP
- HAUNTED GEORGE/HEX DISPENSERS-split-EP
- NOTHING PEOPLE-In The City/Really Good Time-45
- GAYE BLADES-Don't Get Married/Bobby Is A Lover-45
- PENETRATORS-Teenage Lifestyle/Gotta Have Her-45
- BILLY BAO-10"
- BUZZER-Live

PAUL CURRAN & ARIEL AWESOME

- BAADER BRAINS-LP
- BASTARD SONS OF APOCALYPSE-LP
- CONVERSIONS-Prisoner's Intentions-LP
- INSTÄNGD-Mitt Svar På Ingenting-EP
- KOMMUNEN-Den Svenska Modellen-EP
- NEEDLES-Twisted Vision-EP & Live
- OFFSIDES/RIPSHIT-split-EP
- THE REACTION-Right Now-LP
- REPERCUSSIONS-No Peace-EP
- SONGS FOR MOMS-The Worse It Gets The Better-LP

JONATHAN FLOYD

- BOOM BOOM KID-CD / TEENAGE BOTTLEROCKETS-LP
- REPERCUSSIONS-No Peace-EP
- NOTHING PEOPLE-In The City/Really Good Time-45
- LAMPS-Tim Ford/Cowboy-45
- THE HEARTATTACKS-Stay/Go-EP
- HAUNTED GEORGE/HEX DISPENSERS-split-EP
- FUTURE VIRGINS/ONION FLAVORED RINGS-split-EP
- DOWN IN THE DUMPS-Dumps Luck-CD
- GRABASS CHARLESTONS / TIM VERSION /
- THIS BIKE IS A PIPEBOMB-Live

LAYLA GIBBON

- SILLA ELECTRICA-Demo
- NEEDLES-Twisted Visions-EP
- LES VANDALES-Loup-Garou-EP
- LOS MONJO-Cerdos-EP
- INSTÄNGD-Mitt Svar På Ingenting-EP
- CONVERSIONS-Prisoner's Intentions-LP
- NAZI DEATH CAMP-We're Not Special-EP
- COKE BUST-Fuck Bar CultureEP
- LAMPS-Tim Ford/Cowboy-45
- LATEX NOVELTIES-A Girls Best Friend-LP

CHRIS HUBBARD

- INSTÄNGD-Mitt Svar På Ingenting-EP
- REPERCUSSIONS-No Peace-EP
- BASTARD SONS OF APOCALYPSE-LP
- LES VANDALES-Loup-Garou-EP
- CONVERSIONS-Prisoner's Intentions-LP
- SOFT SHOULDER-Hit Single/Temperary-45
- NEEDLES-Twisted Vision-EP & Live
- SACRED SHOCK-Deadlines-EP
- SILLA ELECRICA-Demo
- BRILLIANT COLORS-Live

KENNY KAOS

- THE BILLYBONES-We're Selfish-EP
- PENETRATORS-Teenage Lifestyle/Gotta Have Her-45
- THE TOYOTAS-Run Down Cities-EP
- VICIOUS CYCLE-Neon Electric-EP
- THE HEARTATTACKS-Stay/Go-EP
- SECRETIONS-Blast Off-45
- MARY WEISS-Stop And Think It Over-45
- BILLY CHILDISH-It Should Be Me/Loray Head-45
- NAZI DEATH CAMP-We're Not Special-EP
- THE REAL SWINGERS-England's Rose-45

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl or CD-only releases to the address on the previous page. See Demos section for where to send tapes & CD-Rs.

CAROLYN KEDDY

- MARY WEISS-45 / JANDEK-Live
- LAMPS-Tim Ford/Cowboy-45
- BILLY CHILDISH-It Should Be Me/Loray Head-45
- THE TOYOTAS-Run Down Cities-EP
- THE REACTION-Right Now-LP
- THE DICTATORS-Everyday is Saturday-CD
- NEEDLES-Twisted Vision-EP
- THE KING KHAN & BBQ SHOW-Teabag Party- EP
- VICIOUS CYCLE-Neon Electric-EP
- DEMON'S CLAW-S/T-12"

RAY LUJAN

- BOOM BOOM KID-Wasabi-CD
- TEENAGE BOTTLEROCKETS-Warning Device-LP
- ONION FLAVORED RINGS-Perfect Evolution-EP
- THE CROWD-Letterbomb-CD
- ZOOPARTY-You Are Here-CD
- DOWN IN THE DUMPS-Dumps Luc-CD
- ENDGAME-Distracted-CD
- MORAL DILEMMA-Right To Remain Silent-CD
- PRIZZY PRIZZY PLEASE-CD
- SONGS FOR MOMS-The Worse it Gets-LP

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

- REPERCUSSIONS-No Peace-EP
- NEEDLES-Twisted Vision-EP
- BILLY CHILDISH-It Should Be Me/Loray Head-45
- F-Four from 84-EP
- ONION FLAVORED RINGS/FUTURE VIRGINS-split-EP
- NOTHING PEOPLE-In the City/Really Good Time-45
- TILTWHEEL/DOWN IN THE DUMPS-split-EP
- BAADER BRAINS-LP
- THE REACTION-Right Now-LP
- MARY WEISS-Stop And Think It Over-45

NICK MANGEL

- LIMB FROM LIMB-Death, Famine, Plague-LP
- WARCOLLAPSE-Defy!-LP
- BASTARD SONS OF APOCALYPSE-LP
- NUCLEAR DEATH TERROR-And So We Consume-EP
- SQUALORA-And So They Died Miserably Ever After-LP
- DEAD BY DAWN-The Coming Plague-LP
- DEATHORTION-War And Starvation-EP
- DISLICKERS/GIFTGAS ATTACK-split EP
- FIGHTING DOGS- Dead Weight-EP
- AGENTS OF ABHORRENCE-earth.water.sun-CD

BRUCE ROEHRS

- DOPECHARGE / B.S.A./ ACEPHALIX-LIVE
- REPERCUSSIONS-No Peace-EP
- BORN BAD-Moron Music-EP
- SACRED SHOCK-Deadlines-EP
- NUTS & BOLTS-We Don't Wanna Wake Up-CD
- COKE BUST-Fuck Bar Culture-EP
- NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE-Mindless Violence-EP
- LIMB FROM LIMB-Death, Famine, Plague-LP
- LEMMY KILMISTER & THE HEADCATS-Live
- SOCIAL DISTORTION-Live

CISSIE SCURLOCK

- NEEDLES-Twisted Vision-EP
- BASTARD SONS OF APOCALYPSE-LP
- SACRED SHOCK-Deadlines-EP
- LOS MONJO-Cerdos EP
- LES VANDALES-Loup-Garou-EP
- INSTÄNGD-Mitt Svar På Ingenting-EP
- ACURSED-Tunneln I Ljusets Slut-LP
- UGLY LAW-Good Life-EP
- BAADER BRAINS-LP
- CONVERSIONS-Prisoner's Intentions-LP

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

- BASTARD SONS OF APOCALYPSE-LP
- THE TOYOTAS-Run Down Cities-EP
- REPERCUSSIONS-No Peace-EP
- VICIOUS CYCLE-Neon Electric-EP
- NAZI DEATH CAMP-We're Not Special-EP
- DISLICKERS/GIFTGAS ATTACK-Split EP
- LES VANDALES-Loup-Garou-EP
- NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE-Mindless Violence-EP
- UGLY LAW-Good Life-EP
- INSTÄNGD-Mitt Svar På Ingenting-EP

ZINE TOP TEN

- *Big Fucking Deal #3*
- *Drop Dead Dumb #1*
- *Eaves of Ass #6*
- *Ghost Pine #11*
- *Neutral Words #2*
- *Scene Not Heard #2*
- *Short Fast & Loud #18*
- *Smile Hon, You're In Baltimore #9*
- *Thridx Party Dec.07*
- *Two Headed Dog #1*

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CONTRIBUTORS

Dave Adelson
Graham Booth
Cindy Crabb
D X
Fly
Lance Hahn
Carolyn Keddy
Greg Mantooth
Allan McNaughton
Al Quint
Bruce Roehrs
George Tabb
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A WHOLE CRAPLOAD OF MRR BACK ISSUES...

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Ümlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, 3rd Party, No Class.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Mauraurders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres.

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Aaron Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR catalogue #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#221/Oct '01. The G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11, Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, *Artcore*, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, *Snakepit* zine , Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#248/Jan '04. Discharge, Superhelicopter, Jed Whitey, Black Friday '29, Find Him And Kill Him, The Lids, Impratical Cockpit, Face Up To It, History Of Maximum Rocknroll Radio.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl,Vrah.

#252/May '04. Fucked Up, Firestarter, Inepsy, Laukaus, Great Clearing Off, Radio Reelers, Extreme Noise Records, 46 Short, The State, John The Baker, Free Verse, Chrystaei Branchaw photos.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, scene reports from Portland, Boston and Germany.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. The Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, The Boss Martians, Reactionary Three, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Sujcide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, The Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/September '05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oil!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, *Baboon of Sickness* zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/March '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#275/April '06. History of ABC No Rio (Part One), Ringers, Missbrukarna, '90s garage punk scumpit, Anatomi-71, After the Bombs, Rubella Ballet, RIP Pig Champion, Ricky Adam interview and photographs, Sean McGhee, Hard Skin US tour diary.

#276/May '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part One), History of ABC No Rio (Part Two), Vitamin X Asian Pacific tour diary, Soviet Valves Suburban Death Machine, Frustrations, George Hurchalla, Scene reports: Czech Republic and Greece.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/August '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/September '06. Hjerte Stop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & world wide punk scene reports.

#281/October '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/November '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, *Trust* fanzine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/December '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris Fanzine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/January '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) Part One, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos; Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/February '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys & the early Texas punk scene, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) Part Two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona, Spain scene report.

#286/March '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees Part One, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/April '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (*Avow* zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees Part Two, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

#288/May '07. Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Tumor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

#289/June '07. Ultimo Resorte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Social Circkle, Final Approach, Post Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen, and Pampanga scene reports.

#290/July '07. Stormcrow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, *We're Gonna Fight* zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

#291/August '07. *MRR* 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannon, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page retrospective photo-spread, Kawakami/ Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

#292/September '07. New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

#293/October '07. Punk and Immigration Theme issue w/ interviews, articles, and stories. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

#294/November '07. The Hipshakes, Neverending Party, Punk & Immigration article, Finally Punk, La Lucha Para La Justicia en Guatemala, Leftover Crack, AOA.

#295/December '07. Surrender, What If Gods Lie?. The Crawlers, 2:20, The Joneses, Libertario Magazine, Bad Samaritans, Shrapnel, Untermensch.

#296/January '08. Hellshock, Mario Panciera, Anathema, The System, Eddy Current Suppression Ring, The Voids, Cinecyde, Kyklooppien Sukupuutto, Punch In The Face, BSA.

#297/February '08. Marie Kanger-Born, Thrillhouse Records, Contaminators, Oi Polloi, Obstruction, I Walk the Line, Utopia

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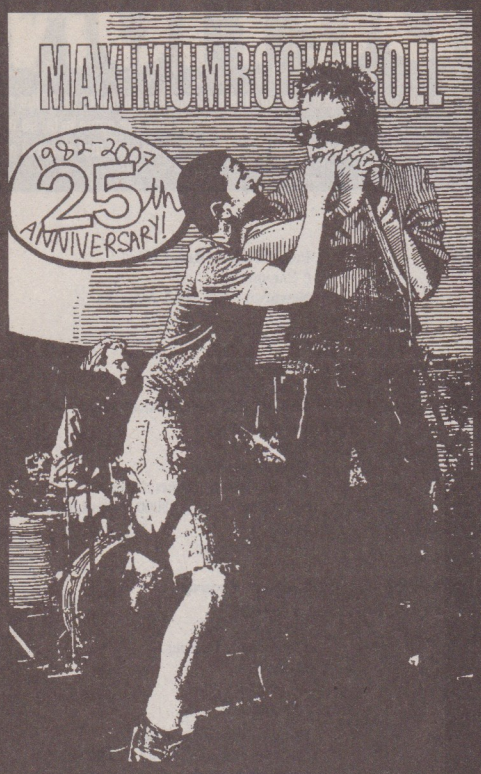

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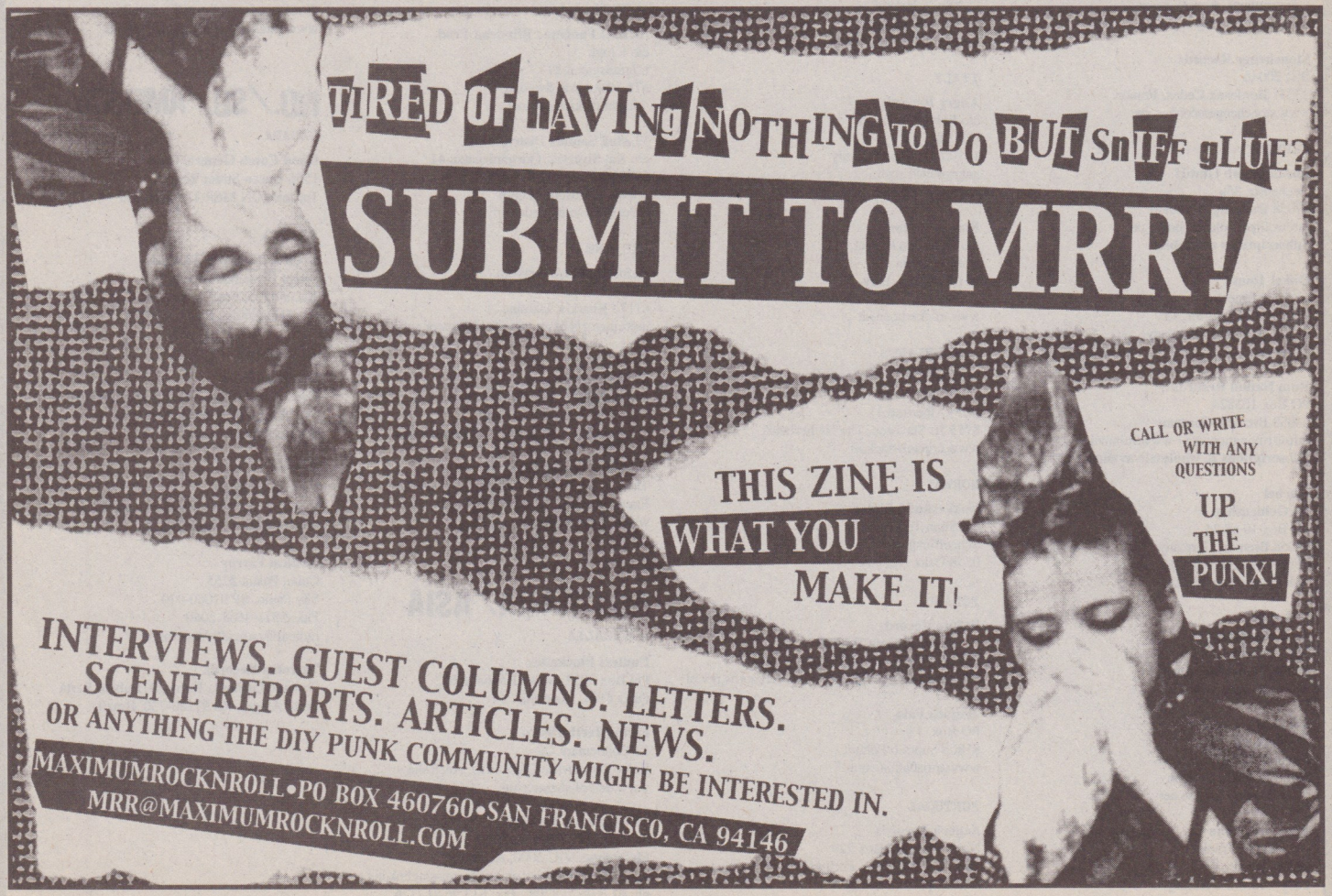

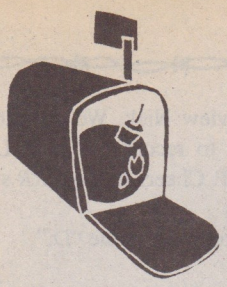

LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. No response guaranteed.

Dear MRR—

Here's an unusual letter for you. One that is actually giving praise and thanks for a review!! No griping, no technicalities, no whining, just mass gratitude to Bruce Roehrs for his review of Barse's *If You Can't Fuck Em, Cut Em Up*. I have been a friend of the band throughout and was devastated to hear that main man Gash Flaps committed suicide before Xmas in 2006. Luckily, the band had recorded their third and best album a month before he died, but chasing various people up for art, lyrics, etc., proved a nightmare and delayed the release for nine-months. We were very lucky to have Hells Tone recs on board (who else would put out a small band's release when there was never any hope of gigs to promote it?).

However, with all of that done, we were soon reminded how ignorant the music biz is. *Kerrang* were sent two copies , and even though they have a big Barse fan who writes for them (James Sherry) they refused point blank to review it. Big Cheese claimed they didn't get it (I think they meant 'the joke' rather than the copy of the CD) then ignored me, and the local glossy mag *The Crack* simply pretended it never existed. Put simply, *MRR* is the *only* big mag open-minded enough to allow a write up of it, and for that we are eternally grateful. *MRR* has always been supportive of the band, despite their reputation (usually at the hands of Republican or fascist sympathizers) of being pock faced PC'ers.

I have despaired over the years as we've seen various sub-genres taking over the scene with bland music, for example No Idea Records and the like—college kids with out-of-tune vocalists who sound like Bruce Springsteen with constipation, singing songs that mean absolutely *nothing* to anyone working class. I've witnessed hundreds of bands trying to be the next Swingin Utters or Dropkick Murphys, but only managing a handful of good songs. I've been truly baffled at the appeal of tuff-guy US Oi! bands playing as cheerleaders for Georgie Bush . So I've always found it weird that here I am in Stanley, Co., Durham, England—a shitty smalltown without even one decent pub—yet somehow it produces the only album in the last ten years that can come anywhere near the latest Cock Sparrer one. Barse's mistake however, is to recreate a time when bands all sounded different to each other, had a singer who could sing, and simple but clever lyrics that we all could have a laugh at (you won't get any of these emo bands rhyming "skiddies on her knicks" with "the mental age of six"!)

Any good Oi!/street-punk/'77 bands or labels are welcome to get in touch to trade Barse stuff and other UK Oi!/punk at: trevhagl@hotmail.com, and anyone wishing to buy their stuff or copies of my zine, get in touch.

Cheers!

—Trev - *Negative Reaction* zine

Dear Bands—

A lot of you have been skipping us. Don't think we haven't noticed. Albuquerque and Salt Lake told us you've been giving them the cold shoulder too. We're starting to think you don't care, and that hurts our feelings. Don't be that way. We know that San Fran and Chicago have always been a lot nicer to you, but is that any reason to give up on us? Sure, things have been rocky between us in the past, but you've got to admit: when it was good, it was great. We're just trying to say that we've noticed you haven't been around much lately, and we're really starting to miss you. We've grown up a little and hopefully so have you. Can't we give it another chance?

Lots of love,

—Denver, Colorado

Dear Esteemed Punk Colleagues at MRR and Worldwide—

This is Ray Suburbia. Thank you so kindly for the warm review of my zine, *Love In The Time Of Scabies*, in issue 297. Unfortunately, there was a mistake, that being my address. You see you listed my home as being 5 houses further north that it really is. The correct address is 2919 N. Buffum, Milwaukee, WI 53212. Hopefully, not too many missives will be lost because of this.

Thank you so very much,

—Ray!

P.S. - A collected edition of issues #2-#6 of my zine will be available in February.

Hey—

As you know, over two million Iraqis have had to flee. Most are in Syria and Jordan, and as you know, the US government continues to arm the most vicious right-wing sectors as usual. The "cleansing of insurgents" in villages and the cities includes random bombing and helicopter strafing. Beyond the mainstream media images of "tribal conflict" and real life right-wing religious militias' massacres daily, we all have to admit that the USA invasion of Iraq has created a bloodbath and a refugee crisis of no equal in present times. We cannot stop our two-party system of mass murder, yet. But we can offer mutual aid. As little as it may be. Please start doing benefits for Iraqi refugees in Jordan and Syria. Some of this money also filters to internally displaced Iraqis that don't have the means to escape. I am doing benefits for the collateralrepairproject.org. There are three American women coordinating this, and Sasha is in Amman now. It goes only to micro-loans so the refugees can start small businesses to peddle on the streets, and for food, and books for their kids who are missing their schools. It is all bottom up and no overhead. Maybe you can find another organization to give money to. Okay, but do something about this horrible despair our government has put a whole nation into. You all really shouldn't even sing songs or do that punker dance, unless you are doing what little you can to reach out to them, otherwise, we are all "good Germans."

—Tommy Strange (Strawman, Zero Defex, Songs For Emma)

Dear Maxi-Rocker—

Sad, sad, sad times...Why, oh why, do people like Graham Booth and Layla Gibbon get so much precious space in MRR? Are they that totes chic? The only thing I know, nerds like Graham Booth are actually killing music. Buying records and tapes for insane amounts of cash just because, I mean, guy, if you don't actually listen nor like records that you buy, don't write about them in *MRR*. Collector scum like you make old records cost so fucking much. Never mind that it's shit, never

mind that you don't even like it, someone probably wants that record, and it's the reason for you to keep it in your collection. Pathetic.

What's up with hype making, Layla Gibbon? I don't know if you're aware of it, but you actually make me never ever want to give Mika fucking Miko or Finally fucking Punk a listen. Never. Just because your every-high-school-cheerleader type column bragged about them so much. Luckily, I listened to Sex Vid before you started bragging about them in your teen-mag-alike-columns. Whatevs.

Okay, so I listened to "Lefty" Hooligan's advice and gave your columnists a bit of feedback. Probably I'll get some witty-ass rebuttals, never mind. As long as people like Mykel Board, Al Quint, George Tabb, Chris Boarts, Mantooth, Allan McNaughton, and Bill Florio keep writing for *MRR*, I will buy it.

—Troyanwhoress

P.S. One more thing Layla. I, like, totes admire you knowing every word to Man Lifting Banner songs and liking Endpoint back in the '90s. I still love them both.

Maximum RockNRoll—

I just thought I'd write after 21 years of *MRR* being my bible to what is going on inside the DIY community. The coverage is fantastic from the witty columns, imperative and informative political situations, and the bands…holy shit! My collection is largely based off the reviews *MRR* gives even though I disagree sometimes with critique's or methodologies and approaches to a scale tipping towards elitism. I have been in underground DIY Detroit punk bands for 21 years—1986-1991 with Anti Social Degenerates. We split into two bands and wound up coming full-circle when, by public demand, we reformed with all of 1987's original members to open for New York hardcore legends Murphy's Law. Since then, we re-launched with more passion for what we are doing now then ever. We know what message we want to send, from which political platform—that has evolved from the Reagan administration to Bush's reign of terror. We are an older, wiser, and more talented band, as you'll hear from our re-released material from the '80s and an unreleased 7" from 1991. A 2007 release on our own DIY label Obnoxious Records is a 13-song LP that has just been snowballing (to our amazement) where we want it to be: in the hands of independent punx. Believe it or not the LP has not received anything less then a 4-star review. For example, it stomped on Dropkick Murphy's *Warriors Code* and Anti Flag's new major label sell-out record. I know that is not worth a dollar for the coke machine to anyone reading this but I think punk bands do it for the recognition obviously more than the money because it means it is getting your opinions through and to as many people as possible. The scene reporter for the Midwest here, Michael Ry, runs a Detroit awards blog naming us #1 hardcore band in Detroit and #1 cover (I knew Nick Mangel would think we were some misogynist pigs when he first looked at it). These things make bands like us happy and anyone who says otherwise is a bit too cynical. The review started with our name and cover. Number one: we are a product of the '80s. When we were 14-years old, guys in Trans-Ams would drive by and chuck beer bottles at us because we had dyed mohawks, boots, and bristles. Anti Social Degenerates seemed like the perfect name in 1987 when we finalized it. Plus, you have to understand, all the bands that influenced us in the '80s had names with initials. We always tried to stay away from that ,but it was uncontrollable for people not to reduce it to A.S.D. Even the local papers would call us that. Number two: I knew *MRR* would be skeptical about the cover. It was done by Craig Holloway who has made quite a name for himself. He has done Agnostic Front's *Warriors* LP, Hatebreed, and the new Negative Approach and Meatmen material. When we spoke on the phone and told him what we wanted the cover to look like, I thought to myself, "I want it to represent two decades in an underground DIY punk band." And if you look at it, it seem like a cliché to "street-punk" bands today, but that was my life—that cover; playing in living rooms and condemned crack houses. There were no PC punx. There were punk rock dudes and chicks getting high and fucking at any club, venue, hall, or bathroom stall. That is how it was. I think Nick recognized this fact after his first pre-judgment of a "street-punk/Punkcore atrocity." He found out that we are the real deal. You talk about a band that has lived by the DIY code and is punk rock in its purest form. Nick Mangel didn't take the elitist pre-judgment road that has long become a trend at *MRR*. He used words like "venomous vocals" (thanx, btw) and "an unpolished sound," because that is just the way we wanted to record it. We did 13 songs live in two days. Then laid down the vox. Be looking out for our 1991 unreleased EP and our *Puberty Years* LP compiling 1988's 18-song *Hatemongers...A Product of Evolution*, three demos, and a live bonus track. All can be purchased at www.myspace.com/obnoxiousrecordsoi. I just wanted to give back a little insight into an old-school veteran anarcho hardcore band that has been under the radar for too long and it's time to really start moving this machine forward. Thanks for the review Nick. We go into the studio this month to record our next LP to crush the *Chaos* LP. Cheers to the *MRR* staff.

—Vern Obnoxious

MCHC for life! Cheers from the "D."

MRR—

First off, *MRR* rocks! I'm "preaching to the choir" and just emphasizing the fact and employing you to pass your used copies on to others that are "out of the loop." Leave it on the bus, hand it to a kid, dress up in white short-sleeve shirts, black pants, and a tie, and in pairs on bikes, spread the word door-to-door. You get my drift.

Secondly, and the jest of this letter, is to expose how the corrupt system works and how to never take no for an answer. Case in point: our band (Nuclear Skull) is totally DIY and I take care of "everything," including legal duties and filing all the trademarks. I filed Nuclear Skull with no problems whatsoever. However, while applying for the trademark "Nuclear Skull-N-Bones" our paperwork suddenly disappeared and we got emails from anonymous persons saying, "we're the only Skull-N-Bones and your attempts at a trademark are denied, and blah, blah, blah…signed Skull and Bones Society." Oh, I'm so scared.

Whatever. I know I'm "shit-hot" on taking care of incoming mail and I never received any letter from the trademark office. This cost me $325 that I might have just as well flushed down the toilet. My appeals (of course) have fallen on deaf ears and have been denied. What a shock, huh? It's obvious that this "DIY punk effort" has treaded on some "hallowed ground" and upset a bunch of rich boy, silver spoon, college frat fucks. Boo-hoo.

Our response is to hit the nail home with the knowledge that the punk rock community thrives on eating these fucks alive and name our next CD *The Skull-N-Bones Society*. And it's already copy-written as such because we say it is. How simple is that to put the finger to their face? The point is: don't be intimidated! Answer every injustice with a positive response and put the finger in their face(s). Punk fucking rock kicks their asses every time.

Thirdly and last; pair up, get the *Blues Brother* outfits, get some exercise by riding your bikes door-to-door pushing *MRR* because it fucking rocks! I don't read the Bible, I read *Maximum RocknRoll*. Pass it on!

—Mark Scott

Nuclear fuckin' Skull-N-Bones!

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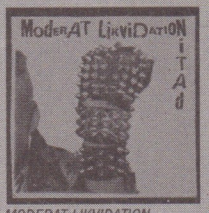

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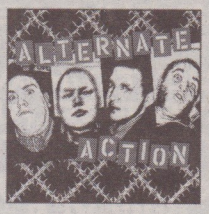

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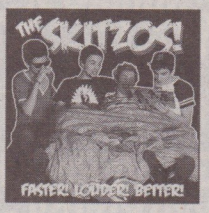

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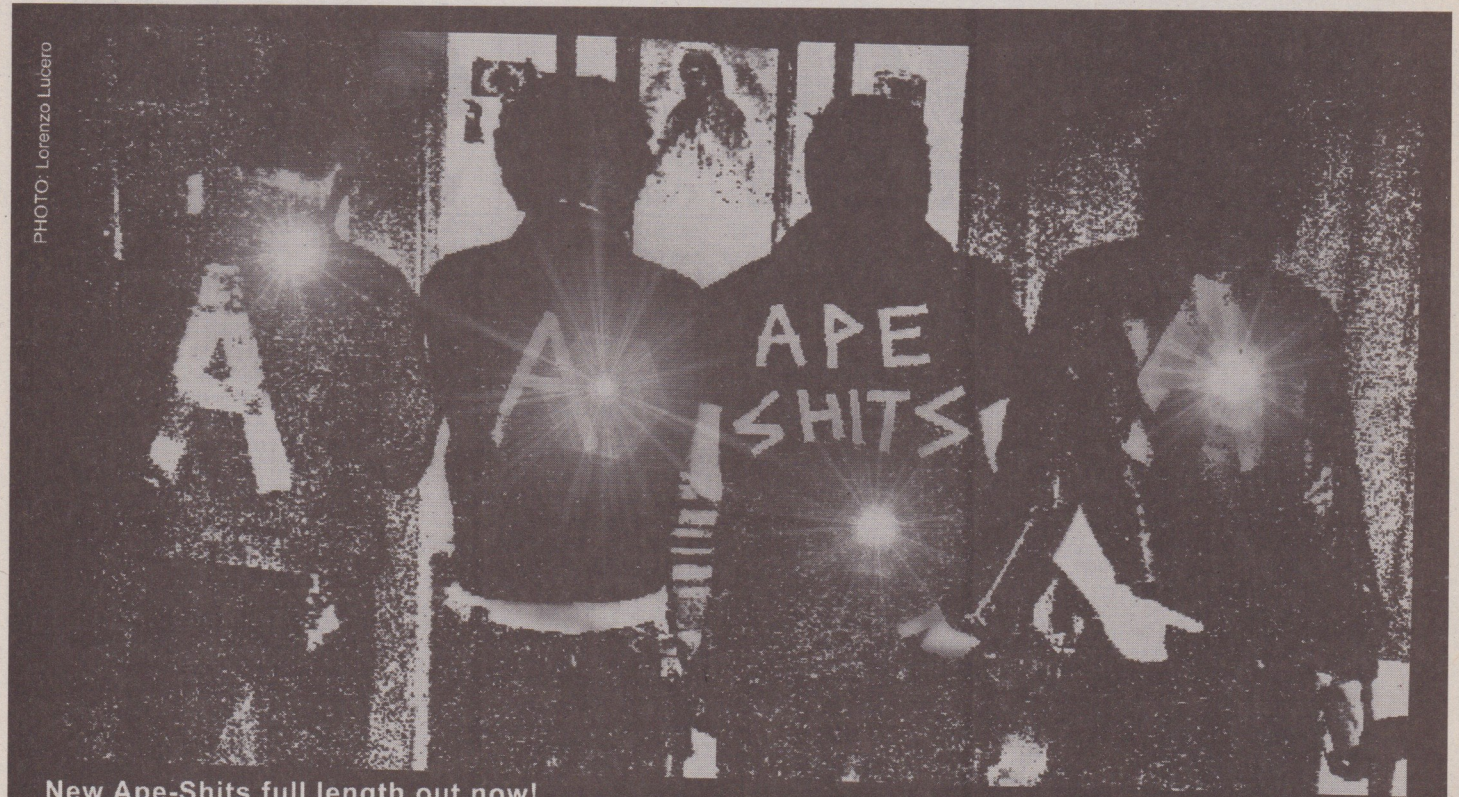

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COLUMNS

Maybe You Remember This

My whole face scrunches up like I'm looking at something in a horror movie.

Maybe I should add some red cabbage to the collard greens, that's what I'm thinking—there's an old red cabbage at the bottom of this drawer, let me see if it's still OK. I pick it up in the bag—it looks fine until I notice this white mold crawling out of it like claws and then my chest is locked, shoulders up high and tense, throat pulled tight and I'm shaking. The sound is a vibrating in my throat, oohhuhuhuhuh kind of like a ghost in a movie except it's me.

I put the bag with the cabbage on the counter, but then I have to take it out right away to the trash—I look again and the same thing with my body, what is it about this mold? I almost want to save the cabbage so I can investigate this feeling, but it's mold—I can't save mold. Even now while thinking it, I'm getting that same feeling in my chest. A while back, I read this book by Margaret Randall where she talks about her phobia of mushrooms, and how she eventually realizes that's where she's stored her memories of her father sexually abusing her.

Like once when adzuki beans got stuck in this drain with big holes that I had in an old apartment and I totally panicked, had to throw the drain out I was so disgusted—something about being trapped and cut up. Or, more clearly, with this knife that I kept thinking about when I first started to remember I was sexually abused, when I went to that house that last time before the eleven-year gap I tried to pick up the knife but my hand would start shaking and I couldn't—finally I succeeded in wrapping it in newspaper. Then I kept it under my bed for years and even moved it from apartment to apartment until I realized I was still scared of it, scared that somehow I would hold accidentally chop off a finger or even my neck or poke out one of my eyes. Sometimes I could see my father with a knife over my body I'm on top of a bar counter fireplace and he cuts me open like a chicken. The way memory is stored sometimes in ways that can't be literal. It's hard not to get caught up in delineating the shape of events, the shape I'll never know even if I can never let go of trying. I want to make something illogical into an orderly timeline of events that I can struggle to understand. Unfortunately memory doesn't work that way, at least not my memory—in some ways my father did chop off my neck because I never learned how to breathe, always throat pulled tight, shoulders high and tense I learned not to shake to hold everything still when everything wouldn't hold.

Sometimes I still thought maybe he would protect me from the vibrating of my throat, the knife everything he stabbed into me, for years I could only chop vegetables with a tiny little knife no bigger than the one you'd use to butter bread. Even if I was chopping a whole cabbage. But I don't know where the mold comes in, thinking about it now my whole face scrunches up like I'm looking at something in a horror movie. I never could watch horror movies, I was always scared enough. Still I can't look at gore, bloody images stay inside my head like a slideshow with flashing lights illuminating my eyes frozen between images.

I could almost levitate.

In fifth grade music class we learned that song Bye-Bye Love, you know – bye-bye love, bye-bye happiness, hello loneliness—I think I'm gon-na di-ie. Something like that—it was catchy, soon I was singing it in the shower with the sponges that started out as little plastic animals but then you put them in water and they grew, grew, grew. They made more sense before they were sponges, it was hard to wash yourself with a brontosaurus. Anyway, soon I was singing Bye-Bye Love, except I didn't want anyone to know I was depressed, maybe this was a little later like sixth or seventh grade but anyway I changed the words so it was hello love, hello happiness, goodbye loneliness—I think I'm gonna live and be hap-ee-ee-ee-ee!

Meanwhile, my father would unlock the door with a scissors and I'd scream get the fuck out—no that was later at first I would just freeze like maybe he could only see the dinosaur. I didn't have the words I wanted. Later I'd scream get the fuck out, but that didn't work either—I just need to piss, he'd say, like there wasn't a bathroom in his bedroom just on the other side of the wall, another bathroom downstairs. The way that aqua green shag rug that hugged the toilet would smell like piss and mold and everything else in the bathroom we'd keep washing it that didn't work for long, there were two rugs actually. The oval-shaped one went by the sink, that's the one I'd grind into with my face in the other one, pressing right into the pubic bone until I could almost levitate. Then maybe there were other smells, and I felt sad again.

Flight.

Maybe you remember this. Adults would peer down and say: enjoy it while you can. They meant childhood. I studied their eyes for evidence: were they lying to themselves, or just to me? I never figured it out.

I collected stuffed-animal mice, if I kept them under the bed then maybe they could teach me something about disappearance. I refused childhood, but still I asked: do animals have souls? I didn't want to eat them—I flipped over mousetraps to rescue someone. I tried to bury my grandmother's fur. I rushed outside to set a lobster free in the yard.

I imagined myself with a forcefield, flying around with mysterious best friends. We would be thirteen forever, there was something magic about thirteen because of the teen part, finally. We would intervene

when children were about to be crushed by the hopelessness of imagination, when animals were dying of starvation, when war was about to begin. You could do a lot with a forcefield, especially if you were between worlds, forever between worlds.

I didn't want to get too old because I saw the way that adults forgot. Thirteen came and went, the only thing I got was money for my bar mitzvah and I saved it. I already knew thirteen wouldn't be enough, now I fantasized about 16 and 18 and 21. My father would scream and pound on the door while I turned up Tracy Chapman's Fast Car, tears pouring down my face, repeating "Fly, fly, fly, fly away-ay..."

I did get something when I was 16—a while back it had been the new car but now it was just perfect for your teenage son, the third car in the driveway hierarchy—you know how Volvos are safe, it didn't matter if the kids had picked away at the shoulder rests on the sides so they looked like they were rotting away, a defect. Volvos break down, but they're safe, and they last forever—liberalism's mantra.

It wasn't my car, but I could drive it, 85 on the highway until it was shaking yes I played Steppenwolf's Born to Be Wild then Magic Carpet Ride when I decided Born to Be Wild was cheesy and overplayed, every teenager who drank listened to that shit. It's so tempting to excuse this taste in the packaged language of teenage rebellion by saying that I was only 13 at the time, but then I said I was driving on the beltway as fast as the car would go and it was shaking so you know.

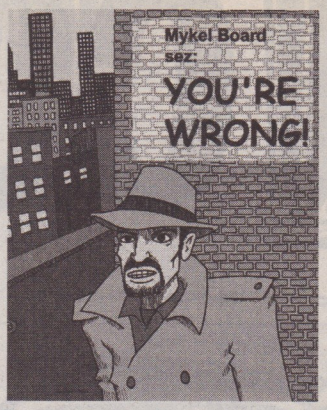
OK, so I got to 16, but it wasn't what I wanted I was already dreaming of 18 and 21 and way further in the distance, so let's circle back. Before I could drive, there was this new kid at school who was from the suburbs. He had a perm but somehow he pulled it off as masculinity—he was pale and had lots of freckles he drove a white convertible which was tacky for our school but he offered me a ride, we ended up in his apartment which doesn't make sense because really it must've been his mother's but his mother wasn't around so it felt like his apartment. We were lying on the bed and maybe he was drinking or I was drinking, he was definitely smoking so maybe I was smoking. It felt sophisticated because we were alone in the house together it wasn't a house it was an apartment; I liked that. But this didn't last long, maybe a few times and then he realized I might not be the right person to be friends with. Now I wonder if he wanted me to kiss him.

Things were different in the suburbs, I knew but I didn't know. The city was what I wanted, in the city we thought the suburbs were tacky. In our suburban neighborhood, we never knew any of our neighbors, when we first moved in our parents tried to introduce us but I was scared. We always went to school in the city, so all the suburbs meant was longing. But when we first moved into that house, a bigger house than the other one in the suburbs, I was ready to create my parents' dream—we were still living in Rockville, a middle-class suburb with upper-middle-class areas, but in a neighborhood called Potomac Highlands so I started saying we lived in Potomac and it stuck, everyone changed the zip code so that it was 20854, the 90210 of suburban Maryland, and then for years after that the post office would correct the zip code on our mail but we decided they were wrong.

I went to the same school from 2nd to 12th grade, and most of the students grew up in the wealthy neighborhoods of Upper Northwest DC, but in high school there was an influx of suburbanites—they had perms and drove convertibles, now I didn't want to be from Potomac but it was too late—sometimes I joked that I was from West Chevy Chase, since Chevy Chase was just across the border in Maryland and seemed as urban as DC, the part of DC that we knew. The truth is that the kids from DC were actually richer than the kids from the suburbs, but it didn't seem that way because they didn't have cars and they asked you for money at recess. It's funny to have an awareness of class privilege and a desire to erase that privilege with a different kind of privilege of belonging.

But back to 16, what was good was that I could have imaginary friends and just drive away into the distance and then I was hanging out with them. They weren't imaginary to me, I mean I didn't imagine they existed I just wanted other people to think I wasn't so lonely.

My most recent anthology is Nobody Passes: Rejecting the Rules of Gender and Conformity—feel free to tell me what you think! You can also check in on me via my blog, nobodypasses.blogspot.com. These days I'm the reviews editor at the brilliant new feminist magazine Make/shift, where I also have a column but only twice a year (that's how often the magazine comes out). I live for feedback, so send me love letters and/or delicious threats via my new homepage (the URL has changed, and there's a glamorous new design), www.mattilda-abernsteinsycamore.com, which includes past MRR columns. Or you can write to me at 537 Jones Street, #3152, San Francisco, CA 94102.



"Anytime you find you're right, you should be wrong."
— Richard Ford

Jesus, what is that? I've been feeling it all day. Like a pinprick. Finally, in the privacy of this stall, I can poke it out. Right in the fold, the brown wrinkled part. I've got just enough nail left to scrape around a bit. Ah, ah, there it is, plucked from the sphincter. An anal booger. I bring it up to my nose. Smells like everyday shit. I take a closer look. It's a seed. Some kind of little seed, like the outer sprinkling of a sesame bagel. I'd thought those things were metabolized, became part of my body, like how fish turn into brains and ice cream becomes fat and heart disease. I had no idea they pass right through you. POW! From the mouth to the toilet. I'd never have known if one hadn't gotten stuck where it hurt. Who wudda thunk it? Knowledge is a pain in the ass. But I guess it's good for you.

I don't know when you'll be seeing this. It doesn't matter. You only need to know that I'm writing it in December. In that quiet period between Christmas hell and New Year's drunken debauchery. It's a year-end column—for me. A summation of what I've been trying to tell you. A list of how you—like me with my misbelief about sesame seeds—are wrong.

Time and space prevent me from telling you every way you're wrong. But here are a few important ones—a recap.

Recycling is bad for the environment. You think the opposite. You think that every time you drop your Mountain Dew bottle in that round-holed container by the park, you're doing a good deed. You're wrong.

It's Thursday morning—real early. The exhaust-belching recycling truck winds its way through city streets. Stopping every half block, some poor shlub lifts plastic bag after plastic bag of old soup cans, shredded stock reports, Coke bottles. He throws them into the truck.

"OK! Next one!" he shouts.

Somewhere around 10 a.m., they're done. Then it's off to the recycling plant. At the plant, dozens of workers tear open each plastic bag, empty the contents, and throw the bags onto a mound of unrecyclable plastic. They separate the contents. Then ship them to other recycling plants using other gas-powered, exhaust-belching trucks.

Let's follow the paper to the plant. When it arrives, electrically powered machines soak the paper. Gallons and gallons of precious water. Then more electric machines mulch the wet mixture and turn it into paper soup.

After mulching, the paper is electrically dried and pressed. All that electricity uses resource-depleting turbines or radioactive timebombs.

After that, still other machines wrap it in still more paper and ship it to a Staples warehouses. Staples stamps the paper RECYCLED, puts on a higher price, and then ships it to their own outlets.

You think this uses less energy than cutting down a tree? Yeah, right.

Then what do we do? Nothing?

How about not using the paper in the first place? How about sending an email and *not* printing it out? How about giving a phone call? Buying a used book? Calling the catalog company to ask them to take you off their lists?

Recycling lets you consume guilt-free. That's its real destructive nature. Recycling tells people, "Everyone can help. Just do a little bit. Separate your garbage and we'll be all right."

It lets the big guys off the hook. Hey, don't worry about GE buying water and reselling it to impoverished Africans (get rid of comma, use the period, you did both). Don't look at Exxon sucking out the earth's belly like giving a giant blowjob. I bet GE and Exxon recycle. So it's all OK.

Vegetarianism causes hunger: You think the opposite. You think that every carrot you eat feeds a starving child in Darfur. There's more on the bottom of the food chain than at the top. If you eat at the bottom, you use fewer resources. You're wrong.

In case you missed the publishing event of 2007: *The Official Punk Rock Book of Lists by Amy Wallace and Handsome Dick Manitoba* came out in November.

In that book, I list nine ways in which vegetarians are destroying the earth. The fundamental reason—the one that underlies all the other—is that cattle already exist. If we don't eat them, they live longer.

Here's Bossie. She eats her hay, blinks the flies away from her eyes. Shits. After three or four years, farmer Joe leads her off to the house of horrors.

PLOW! Blood spattered, she's torn limb from limb. Her *doe-eyes* gouged out. Body cut into thousands of pieces, patted into thousands of Big Macs, and shipped off to Mickey D's.

Now imagine a world of increasing vegetarians. There aren't enough people to take care of all the Bossies at three or four years old. Farmer Joe has to wait. In the meantime, Bossie shits more, eats more food, drinks more water. Then what?

If the average cow lives four years and then is slaughtered, that cow consumes four years worth of resources. If there are more vegetarians, then the average cow lives eight years, instead of four. That means the cow consumes twice as many resources. Plus, the vegetarian also consumes her own resources, competing with the cow, creating even more scarcity.

Take responsibility for your food. Eat cows raised humanely, outside the factory. Use the evil marketplace against itself. Encourage farmers to give cows more space. Feed them better food. Buy organic so farmers will *go* organic. Buy humane so cattlemen will see humane sells. But vegetarianism only makes the problem worse.

Smoking is good for you: You think the opposite. You think big tobacco companies are evil. Worse than Nike, Wal-Mart, or Microsoft. You think smoking causes cancer, emphysema. You think people are at risk from *secondhand smoke*. You're wrong.

A little internet research is all you need. (Details at http://www.kidon.com/smoke/percentages.htm) Except for The Bahamas, the United States has the lowest men's smoking rate in North America, 28.1 percent. (I use men only, because in some cultures, women just don't smoke.) In cancer, America is number one. But how about lung cancer?

The US has the *highest* lung cancer rate of any place in North America, South America, Oceania, and all of Asia except Seychelles. (Where?) In Japan, more than half the men smoke (59 percent). The lung cancer rate there is 47.9 per 1000 people. In the US, it's 85.9. Looks like smoking *prevents* lung cancer.

What's up with all the TV commercials? In New York, we have a commercial with a guy talking through an artificial voicebox, swabbing his neckhole in the shower, telling people how cigarettes wrecked his life. Yeah, who speaks for the other dead? Where are the commercials showing the agricultural workers breathing pesticide? Where are the pictures of the throatholes of coal minters slowly strangling from Black Lung disease?

Hey buckaroos! It's a trick! Tobacco companies are the sacrificial lambs for corporate America. Never mind the shit that goes in the water you drink. Never mind the crap spewed into the air—or the radiation from *depleted* nuclear weapons, used in Iraq, stored in Kansas. Oh no. If an American gets sick, it's smoking!

Smoking in 2008 takes balls. Lighting up means you're not falling for the ruse. It means you've seen through the deception and aren't buying it. If you smoke, you're showing the world you *know*. Of course, I recommend American Standard or some other indie non-pesticided cigarette. But even a Marlboro is better than nothing. Don't allow yourself to be bullied into thinking if you get sick... you did it. Bullshit.

They did it.

Science is not god: You think the opposite. You're an atheist. No God, so what do you believe in? Science. If only people would look at the world in a scientific way, you say. The world would be a better place. Trust science to find truth. The scientific method will analyze the problems and give you the right answers. You're wrong.

Scientists can tell us what will happen to a bog if ATVs roll across it indiscriminately for a decade or two, What scientists cannot tell us is how to weigh the relative importance of mechanized joyrides through the bogs, a healthy water table, the preservation of bird habitat—and the will of the majority. These are moral and political issues, not scientific ones. There is a certain implicit conceit that if you attach the word scientific to anything, then that makes it more important or more valid. And that's really metaphysically wrong; it's not true.

—John Toren in *Macaroni Zine*.

Yeah, I hate religion as much as the next guy—or at least as much as the next guy should. But science is one of the best arguments *for* religion. At least Catholics take a moral stand—even if it is the wrong one.

You're dying. In the hospital. A new drug could save your life. It hasn't been approved yet, but it looks promising. It works in a new way, targeting disease cells without damaging the tissue around them.

Breathing is hard. You've got tubes up your nose, forcing air into your lungs. The

effort of expanding your chest hurts so much you just want to pull them out.

Yet you cling to life. Maybe this one last drug. This last chance will help you pull through. You've agreed to be a guinea pig. This is your last chance.

HAH HAH! Fooled you! You got the placebo! You're the control group! Someone *else* got the real medicine. See you in hell!

Science demands a control group. It demands a neutral test. It demands that people die. Science has no ethics. Scientists make medicine, cluster bombs, computers, napalm all with equal morality...or lack of it.

Scientists are interested in *proof*. They want to know how and why. They're not interested in *should*.

Of course some scientists have ethics. Just like some religions are tolerant. But science itself has no more ethics than a TV set. Like monotheistic religion by its nature is intolerant, science by its nature is amoral.

Religion is ethical totalitarianism. Science is no ethics at all.

GW Bush is not evil incarnate: You think the opposite. You think the man is Mr. Evil. You think that even Hilary Clinton would be better for America and the world. You think George is only a tool of the right. An idiot with no principles—or at least no principles you share. You're wrong.

Dubya has appointed more Negroes, Hispanics, and other minorities to more high offices than any other president. Two colored Secretaries of State. One of them a woman. Was it for show? Check out his *former Hispanic* attorney general...an old pal. His Secretary of State—they went way back. Who else can say that? GW has been the most principled, least racist president the US has ever had.

During his lame-duckedness, what does he do? Pardon his friends like Clinton did? No! He vetoes child-insurance because it's "too socialist." Sure, he's wrong. It's harder to be "too socialist" than to have too much nookie. And that's hard! But he's stuck to his principles. More than any politician since Jimmy Carter. You've got to admire that.

OK, that's a summary of the most important ways you were wrong in 2007. Hope you had a drunken New Year. Next year's election should be as easy as ABC (Anybody *But* Clinton). It's better that you don't vote at all than vote for Hillary. I'll explain why in a future column. In the meantime, remember you can improve your life—and the world—by eating meat, smoking, distrusting science, not recycling, and putting in a nice word for GW Bush.

Yeah, changing the way you think is, like a sesame seed caught in your anal fold, a pain in the ass. Trust me, it's good for you.

ENDNOTES: [email subscribers (god@mykelboard.com) or website viewers (www.mykelboard.com) will get live links and a chance to email comment on the column]

—> *If I wanted to donate to sweatshops, I'd buy Nikes dept:* I get this letter from SoHo Partnerships asking me to contribute. This group pays local homeless people to clean sidewalks, empty garbage cans, do stuff no one else wants to do. Many of these people are required by law to work. In an amazing Catch 22, New York law says homeless can't live on the street in the winter. *But*, in order to use city homeless facilities, they have to work. Who'll hire people with no address and no references? You guessed it, good ole SoHo Partnerships. And the wages? Six dollars an hour! I don't know where you work. In New York, six dollars an hour doesn't pay for lunch. Plus, they have to use another two to three hours of non-wages to pay for the shelter they don't want to stay in. Er...who was it that abolished slavery? When did that happen?

—> *But in This Case dept:* Usually I think it's lame to put down someone because of spelling mistakes. Most geniuses, including Einstein and me, are bad spellers. But my jail-pal Kyle sent me this ad for merchandise from *The Racial Nationalist Party of America.* You've got your Mussolini videos, your "KKK with Blood Drop" flag, and *Storm-trooper Marches* CDs. Want something, punker? Well, you can buy a ton of CDs by *Screwdriver.* Yep, that's how they spell it in the catalog. You'd think they, of all people, would know!

The website corrects the error, but still entertains with their description of payment method:

The RNPA has taken itself out of the Jewish banking system so do not send checks or bank originated money orders. Send only postal money orders. Make payable to Karl Hand. Send cash only at your own risk. All orders are considered as a donation to the Racial Nationalist Party of America. Include 10% shipping and handling.

—> *Running business like a government dept:* After all, the hideous Bloombergs of the world talk about "running government like a business." You now have Google, planning to run their business like a government—the American government.

According to The National Coalition Against Censorship Google is "developing ambient-audio identification technology" that turns on the microphone in personal computers to listen in on what's going on in the room. According to Google, the purpose of this is to "monitor what television channels Americans watch." Yeah, right.

—> *Running education like a government dept:* F.I.R.E., a libertarian Free Speech site, issued a report that shows nearly three-fourths of the surveyed colleges have "speech codes" already ruled unconstitutional. These include:

Northeastern University in Boston, which prohibits students from using the university's network to "transmit or make accessible, material, which in the sole judgment of the University, is offensive…"

Florida Gulf Coast University, which prohibits "expressions deemed inappropriate."

Ohio State University, which instructs students in the residence halls: "Do not joke about differences related to race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, ability, socioeconomic background, etc."

There are tons of other examples. Go through the supporters of such stupidity and you'll find a pantheon of *liberals* who believe in "freedom of speech"—as long as it doesn't offend anybody.

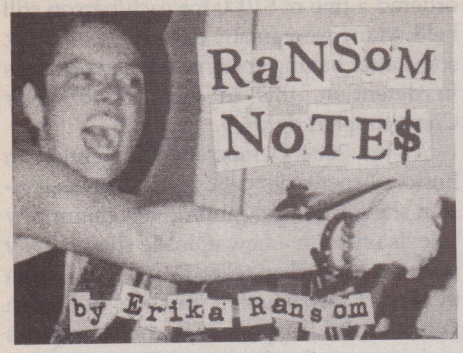
—> *Running governments like governments dept:* The Committee to Protect Journalists ranks the US sixth among jailers of journalists. That puts us just behind Uzbekistan—tied with Burma.

—> *A touch of inspiration dept:* Many of my readers have attended the Brian Deneke memorial shows around the country.

The average MRR reader was still nursing when a Texan jock killed Deneke, 15 years ago. The reason? The 19-year-old was a punk rocker. He had a mohawk. He listened to the same music you do.

Every year, there are memorial benefits around the country in his memory. I attended the one in New York. Valerie aka Xena, who organized it, is a goddess of the highest order. All the bands were great. (Especially a new kiddie band from Staten Island called *Lucky Fucks*...and they are! I saw the teenaged lead singer making out with this hot girl in front of the show. I was jealous of *both* of 'em!)

The atmosphere was terrific. People of all ages, genders, persuasions, in the pit and out of it. Friendly as a Dominican whore! Wow! Find out about the memorial at http://tinyurl.com/yon292 or just Google. You'll find a ton of links!



American Dreams

January 4, 2008

While you were out, the troops were loading their guns, and the war machine of the empire did not sleep, even as the confetti filled Times Square and the shops were full.

"In our election-obsessed culture, everything else going on in the world—war, hunger, official brutality, sickness, the violence of everyday life for huge numbers of people—is swept out of the way while the media covers every volley of the candidates. Thus, the superficial crowds out the meaningful. This is very useful for those who do not want citizens to look beyond the surface of the system. Hidden by the contest of the candidates are real issues of race, class, war, and peace, which the public is not supposed to think about."

—Howard Zinn, "Tennis on the Titanic" in *A Power Governments Cannot Suppress.*

At the beginning of January, the election frenzy is the main subject of the news. Smartly dressed television correspondents report on every movement of the top contenders, following them from state to state in the primary elections, reporting on their every word, excitedly revealing the latest poll statistics, which player has inched ahead of the others, what new strategy, gaffaw, or past scandal was revealed today. Meanwhile, the ongoing occupation of Iraq has literally become second-page news, and the class divide continues.

Zinn wrote, "The pretense in disputed elections is that the great conflict is between the two major parties. The reality is that there is a much bigger conflict that the two parties jointly wage against large numbers of Americans who are represented by neither party and against powerless millions around the world."

Take for example the staggering contrast between the great wealth in the United States and the condition of many of its citizens. About two out of every ten kids in the US, 21.9 percent, are growing up in poverty. Among developed nations, this is the highest rate of child poverty in the world. Families are earning less than they did a year ago, even working full time, and about 35 million people in the US live in "food insecure" homes. The federal minimum wage has not been raised since 1997, and is currently $5.15 an hour.

Zinn wrote, "The Democrats and Republicans do not dispute the continued corporate control of the economy. Neither party endorses free national health care, proposes extensive low-cost housing, demands a minimum income for all Americans, or supports a truly progressive income tax to diminish the huge gap between rich and poor. Both support the death penalty and the growth of prisons. Both believe in a large military establishment, in land mines and nuclear weapons." Tweedle Dee or Tweedle Dum—who is winning in the polls?

Being able to vote for the President once every four years and calling that a democracy is a joke, and a sad one at that. The United States, since its very beginning, starting with George Washington down to the present day, has been maintained and engaged to support and defend business, private property, capital, and the security of the wealthy. The interests of the State are not the same, and often directly contradict, the interests of the people. When politicians speak about "for the good of the country" or in the "national interest," whose interests do you think they really have in mind? Do you think politicians and the government care more about the single mother who can't pay her rent this month, or making sure Wall Street is satisfied? Just look at how the government spends our taxes, on weapons instead of homes, on prisons instead of schools. Do we invade countries because it "makes our lives safer" or for "democracy," or because it is profitable for business to do so?

This is nothing new. I am repeating what you can see with your own eyes, like a dark cloud blotting out the sun. It is too large to ignore, the elephant in the room, but because of the web of lies and propaganda that equates war with peace, security with freedom, and exploitation with democracy, we must go on shouting the truth. The US is only a dim shadow of a democracy, and our government is duty-bound only to the wealthy and the corporations they control. The grand promises of *life, liberty, equality* and *justice for all* are nothing but figments of patriotic poetry.

How much longer will we accept our domination?

Errico Malatesta's *Anarchy* was published in 1891, and although he wrote over a hundred years ago (in Italian), his keen observations on the relationship between governments and society remain relevant to our situation today, "In many countries workers nominally have a more or less important say in the election of the government. It is a concession made by the [owners]…to dissuade the people from thinking of emancipation by giving them the illusion of sovereignty. But whether the bourgeoisie foresaw it or not when they first gave the people the vote, the fact is that right proved to be entirely derisory, and served only to consolidate the power of the bourgeoisie while giving the most active section of the working class false hopes of achieving power. Even with universal suffrage—and we could well say even more so with universal suffrage—the government remained the bourgeoisie's servant and *gendarme* [police force]."

Just think of the money and influence needed just to run for President. From www.opensecrets.org/pres08: "After nine months of fundraising, the candidates for president in 2008 have already raised about $420 million. This presidential money chase seems to be on track to collect an unprecedented $1 billion total. By some predictions, the eventual nominees will need to raise $500 million apiece to compete—a record sum."

But what, if by some magic, the people did elect a President who represented the true interests of the people?

Malatesta continues, "The bourgeoisie, feeling its interests threatened, would be quick to react, and would make use of all of the influence and force at its disposal, by reason of its wealth, to recall the government to its proper place as the bourgeoisie's *gendarme*."

We are allowed the *illusion* of power, and nothing more. When we look past the lies and patriotic nonsense, at essence, Malatesta wrote, "The basic function of government everywhere, at all times, whatever title it adopts and whatever its origin and organization may be, is always that of oppressing and exploiting the masses, of defending the oppressors and the exploiters: and its principle, characteristic and indispensable instruments are the police agent and the tax-collector, the soldier and the gaoler [jailer]–to whom must be invariably added the trader in lies, be he priest, schoolmaster [or in our times, the media journalist], remunerated or protected by the government to enslave minds and make them docilely accept the yoke."

Fuckin' hell! The house of cards falls with a bang!

Government, by its very nature, cannot be reformed to serve the interests of the people. We cannot vote our way out of this mess!

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Thinking about it all, I am getting rather upset sitting in my armchair, so here's two election-oriented events coming up to add to your *Slingshot* organizers:

August 25-28, Denver, Colorado
Democratic National Convention

The "Re-create 68" Alliance invites you to "join us in the streets of Denver as we resist a two-party system that allows imperialism and racism to continue unrestrained." Right on. (Go to www.recreate68.org for more details.) Also, Operation Rescue, the rabid pro-life group, has announced it will join with the Christian Defense Coalition to protest the DNC convention. Sounds like an opportune time to protest against hypocritical politicians and the Christian right, all in one weekend.

September 1-4, St. Paul, MN
Republican National Convention

If you are unfamiliar with St. Paul, it is one of the Twin Cities, the other sister being the infamous crust and punk monster of Minneapolis. A "March on the RNC and Against the War" is being planned for the first day by a coalition of groups. The RNC Welcoming Committee, an anti-authoritarian/anarchist group, posted this call to action:

CRASH THE CONVENTION

On September 1-4 of 2008, the Republican Party is coming to Minnesota to celebrate their latest conquests in global domination and exploitation. We of the RNC Welcoming Committee want to make sure that this time the fear-mongers will be met with their own biggest fear: people mobilized, organized, and taking the future back into their own hands.

For those of you who abhor the rapid growth of racist militarized borders across stolen lands, the raids and deportations, destruction and commodification of our shared and living earth, police brutality and prison industry, fear propaganda and subjugation, exploitation and robbery of peoples worldwide, and all forms of injustice and oppression - we ask you to be prepared for 2008. This will require new alliances, strong networks, the awakening of those who've given up, as well as the mobilization of those who've never before taken action. Let's use this opportunity to make the changes we thirst for manifest and take root before us, making the Republicans /Democrats (whatever you want to call them) obsolete. There will be a strategizing weekend May 3rd, 2008. (For more information www.rncwelcomingcommittee.org)

Land of the Free Zone

With both the upcoming DNC and RNC conventions, I believe we can expect more of the same as far as the reaction of the State. The *gendarmes* will be well outfitted and prepared, fulfilling the State's mission, protecting the interests and parties of the powerful.

Let's remember what happened during the last Presidential election, the conventions of 2004.

Christopher Krohn, former Major of Santa Cruz, published "Untold Stories from RNC 2004 in NYC" about what the mainstream media was overlooking in their reportage.

"First, the cops. Every police officer, traffic cop, and police cadet was mobilized. They were supported by hundreds more—FBI, Secret Service, National Guard, New York State Troopers. This massive security apparatus totaled almost 40,000. The area around Madison Square Garden became known as the 'Green Zone,' as the US security zone in Baghdad is called. Only in Guatemala City during the 1980s dictatorship of Efrain Rios Montt has this reporter felt so closely watched, had his credentials checked so often. Walls of bicycle and motorcycle cops, waves of helmeted riot police, dozens of plainclothes police were constantly hovering, always trying to be one step ahead of the next protest event, even when there wasn't one. This situation created an almost permanent sense of foreboding, fear, and confusion."

"Secondly, many of the smaller marches were lightly covered by the more than 15,000 media people who were holed up waiting for the Republicans. On Monday there were two marches. The first, a permitted one, saw more than 5000 marching towards MSG. The second, the "Poor People's March," was a non-permitted demonstration which police allowed, had close to 10,000 marchers. On Tuesday, the day planned by the A-31 coalition as being a day of 'direct action,' saw more than 1200 people arrested. The largest number of arrests that day—over 200—came during a non-permitted, War Resisters League procession of a few hundred."

"The most underreported story of this convention is most likely the jail conditions and the time it took before those arrested in street demonstrations were allowed to contact their lawyers and see a judge. In fact, last Friday it got so bad that Judge John Cataldo of the New York State Supreme Court in Manhattan demanded that the city process all demonstrators immediately. When that had not happened by 6pm that day he held the city in contempt and ordered a fine of $1000 for each person still held. Many were finally released late Friday, some after having spent more than 60 hours in detention, this in violation of their Constitutional rights."

At the 2004 Democratic Convention in Boston, I spent the week producing a television show through Cambridge Community Television, with a new episode shown daily on the satellite channel FSTV. As with Krohn in NYC, I saw massive numbers of Boston Police, State Troopers, riot control squads and even federal troops. Every Boston Police motorcycle, squad car, horse, dog, officer and Special Forces vehicle was in the streets, surrounding even the small protests.

Protesters were not allowed near the convention hall, and a special "Free Speech Zone" was created by the city. The "Free Speech Zone" was under a bridge, not within hearing or sight of the entrance to the convention hall, and surrounded by concrete barriers and tall metal fences, topped with barbed wire, surrounded by police on all sides. In order to enter, you had to pass through a guarded gate.

During the marches and rallies, people were constantly videotaped by riot cops, and during the peaceful and fun "Really Free Market" on the Boston Commons, a police helicopter flew for hours so close overhead that the sound of its engine made interviews difficult. There was definitely a feeling of living in an occupied city—I even saw a sniper posted on the top of the capital dome.

In the days and months before the protest, anarchists were harassed by FBI agents who visited their homes, definitely adding to the atmosphere of fear and of being watched.

I suspect that this year's conventions will be as heavily guarded. And, despite the rhetoric, the next US President will do little to improve the lives of people in Iraq, or here at home.

One popular protest chant that comes to mind: *"Is this what democracy looks like?"*

January 6, 2008
Oakland, California

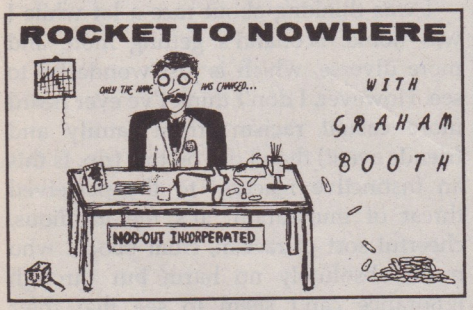
Once again I have found my way to the Pacific. I love living in cities by the sea, as eventually, you will find waves and the smell of salt. In coastal towns the skyline has a definite edge. Skyscrapers, concrete, streets and traffic, noise and lights, the city suddenly stops at the water's edge. All of our human inventions and cultural noise are replaced by water and sky, the primordial energy of Earth and the elements.

I began writing about the election only as

a beginning to my column this month, as the Iowa primary was dominating the news. Then I found myself picking up the books I was reading at the time—Errico Malatesta's *Anarchy* and Zinn's *A Power Governments Cannot Suppress*—and things all seemed to come together. The intensity of State propaganda and the domination of discourse in this country is so thick and heavy, so all-consuming, at times I even have to remind myself of the truth. *People are more powerful than governments.* Our day will come.

Thanks again to all of the volunteers at MRR who make this magazine possible, and the punks who read it, buy it and put in ads to keep it going. Once again my column jumps from the personal, to tour and travel adventures, to political rhetoric, and I appreciate this space. And you, punk, thanks for reading!

Solidarity and Blazing Guitars, Erika Ransom



I am writing this column in a post-New Year's daze. We just got back to Los Angeles after spending two cold weeks traveling back and forth between Chicago and Milwaukee. *The Midwest is fucking cold!* Apparently I have gone über soft, but I finally came to my senses and realized just how much snow and ice sucks! Fuck the ten minutes of warming up the car and scraping ice on slippery driveways every time I want to leave the house! Sure, I could do it, but why? I would rather walk around outside in a t-shirt in January.

This particular January, that t-shirt happens to be a SILVER ABUSE t-shirt. OK, Chicago sucked, but there was some rad sledding action on "Killer Hill," as well as yet another Chicago punk reunion show to be seen: SILVER ABUSE! Let's back up for a sec, though...

So I was in the city at my sister's Christmas party the Saturday after Christmas. Funnily enough my über-corporate sister's roommate is dating an elder punk statesman who hangs out with some of my old friends and bandmates. It is kinda weird moving away for five years only to come back to have your punk friends and not-punk sister hanging out together. It was actually pretty convenient as I could see friends and see the fam all at once. Anyway, I turned out to be a pretty piss-poor houseguest, since about 30 minutes after I arrived at my sister's, one of my friends got a text message from another friend we'd just hassled:

"R U coming 2 partay?"

"No. @ loft party. SILVER ABUSE is about 2 play."

WHa??? We were perplexed. SILVER ABUSE is playing a house party? WTF!!!

"thee SILVER ABUSE?? where?"

"Yes. Loft on Milwaukee. They are starting now."

Holy shit! SILVER ABUSE is playing at a party half a mile away from us. Talk about serendipity. Needless to say, we were in the car within seconds, and, with a dearth of parking spaces on the street, we took our chances at a nearby supermarket parking lot. We were literally running to the loft, trying to find the address, I was freaking out.

SILVER ABUSE is a nearly forgotten Chicago punk band, best known as the band to incite the first punk riot in Chicago, circa 1978. Record-wise, I think they had some tracks on the famed *Busted at Oz* compilation, and a posthumous 7" EP released in 1982, pretty late in their illustrious career. I love the 7", a pretty tough pull around Chicago, although it ventures deeply into the postpunk/no wave world that would have most of you crusties reeling in disgust. Oh, and there's a girl singer.

So we got to the show and ran into some people outside, hoping the band was still playing. It wasn't very loud, and I feared that the band had played two songs and stopped, in typical Chicago fashion. Lucky for us, they were still playing, in the middle of a meandering spazbo FLIPPER-esque song. Circa 2008, I was glad there was a girl...er, middle-aged woman singer—her voice carried most of the show. Sadly we missed their rousing rendition of SKREWDRIVER's *Anti-Social*, re-christened *Anti-Hot-Dog*, but they did pull a few more punk numbers out of their collective sleeves. Awesome show, old people!

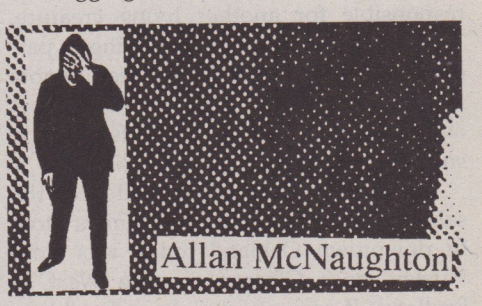
I later learned that I had missed some other affiliated Chicago bands...TOOTHPASTE and THE WAYOUTS; all three bands shared members. This was sad news to me, especially missing THE WAYOUTS who from everything I've heard may have been Chicago's best '70s punk band. According to the few I talked with after the show, THE WAYOUTS were the real highlight. Maybe someday I will have a chance to catch them, although hopefully I won't have to brave the Chicago winter to do so. I guess there's always YouTube.

Beyond parties and SILVER ABUSE shows, Chicago provided for some pretty weaksauce entertainment. I guess I was in the suburbs for most of it. Then again, most of the neighborhoods I used to be intimidated by as a teenager are now so sterile and mall-ified, it wasn't that far off from Orange County.

If you're looking for punk records, the shopping sucked. Luckily I have started collecting just about every microgenre known to man, so I almost always leave with something (that I don't need). Right now, Chicago seems ripe for AOR hair metal, '80s gospel-soul and '70s loner folk. I did get one awesome synth-post-punk album, I'M SO HOLLOW's *Emotion/Sound/Motion* LP from 1980, that currently holds the throne for my favorite UK dark wave LP a la JOY DIVISION / SECTION 25 / NAMES / LUDUS, etc. Do y'all folks even care about all that stuff?

Otherwise, the highlight of my last month (if not the last year) was finding a longtime personal want-list staple (for uh, eight years?) on the wall of a local store for twenty dollars. The band is THE TIMES from Upstate New York, and their track "Atomic Blonde" is a pretty great rockin' punk track. The vocals have a similar British via New Yawk inflection a la their better known brother band THE NOW and infamous *I'm Eating Off a Fashion Plate* single. Part of the intrigue was that it's so rare that not many people have even heard it. I have been combing lists, eBay, internets, trade bins, dollar bins... not once in that time have I seen a copy, and until a scan of the sleeve appeared on collectorscum.com, I was suspicious about whether even existed. When I spotted it at an infamous local record establishment, it took me a minute to even realize what I was looking at...truly one of the wimpiest pink nu-wave sleeves ever made in all its glory.

Bragging is awesome for 2008!



My first major achievement of 2008 was to go to the Sears department store in downtown Oakland this afternoon and

buy a vacuum cleaner. "That doesn't sound like much of an achievement," I can hear you say to yourselves, and I agree, it's not up there with scaling Everest or graduating with a PhD in Chemistry or anything, but it's a bit of a milestone in my life at least. I've never owned a vacuum cleaner before. Oh, my parents had one that I used from time to time, and then when I lived with flatmates I'd heard a rumor that there was one in the apartment somewhere, but I never saw or heard it myself. For the last fifteen years or so I've only lived in places with wooden floors, so I've never really needed a vacuum. A once-over with the old broom whenever the dust bunnies threatened to eclipse the furniture has always sufficed, until now.

The purchase of the aforementioned vacuum cleaner (we always called ours the Hoover, because it was in fact manufactured by Hoover. The one I bought today was made by a different company so I'm suppressing the urge to erroneously call it a Hoover as well) was precipitated by the fact that we have acquired a cat. This cat is responsible for bringing a lot of pleasure and joy to our home, but at a price. There's cat hair fucking everywhere. I'm actually highly allergic to cats (among about a hundred other things). In fact, several years ago when I underwent allergy testing, I reacted so strongly to the cat dander sample that I had to be given an adrenalin shot to prevent me from going into shock. I wouldn't fault you for questioning the wisdom of inviting a cat into my home given my delicate constitution *vis a vis* our feline friends, but it's been OK so far, except for the preponderance of discarded fur. Hence the Hoover. Oops, there I go. In case you're having a hard time following along, the milestone here comes in two parts: one, it involves the acquisition of a household appliance. Now, I'm 37 years old. I've bought household appliances before. The difference here is: two, I had to buy this particular appliance because I have become responsible for another living creature. This is as close as I plan on getting to parenthood, so for me, it's a big deal. I know many of you reading this are either pet owners or parents or both, so feel free to snort with derision and move on.

By some matter of coincidence, the salesperson at the Sears department store in downtown Oakland today was from Paisley, near Glasgow in the West of Scotland. It seems a strange and unlikely place to run into someone from my neck of the woods, and I imagine she was similarly surprised to be selling a Kenmore Hoover (see how that doesn't work?) to a laddie from Glesgy in a Sears department store in downtown Oakland. I happen to have just returned from Scotland where the wife and I spent Christmas and New Year, so conversation soon turned to the weather there (cold; no snow to speak of but it was frosty on Christmas morning so it was sort of a white Christmas). We celebrated the birth of the wee baby Jesus and kept the chill away by sampling fourteen different malt Whiskies in two days courtesy of my brother's father-in-law.

The missus and I went to the People's Palace (a free, public gallery in the East End of Glasgow) to meet our old friend Jer and to view an exhibit on Scotland's role in the slave trade. Unfortunately, we spent so much time drinking tea and catching up in the cafe that the exhibit was closed by the time we got around to going in. A bit of internet research turns up the info that the installation centered around the discovery that a black servant had been painted out of an 18th Century portrait of a Glasgow Tobacco lord and his family, presumably in embarrassment of the lord's role in slavery. I tend to think of slavery as an American phenomenon, and indeed the history of America will forever be blighted by it. But many Scots (particularly Glasgow's tobacco barons) acquired immense wealth thanks to the toils of slaves in the colonies, as well as through facilitating the slave trade through Scotland's busy ports. I've read that poor Scots (and Irish) were sold into slavery too, and worked on farms in the New World owned by English and upper-class Scottish noblemen. Apparently, some of these slaves escaped to the Appalachians, and are probably responsible for the traditional Scottish folk melodies that crop up all the time in American bluegrass and country music. I've only started hearing about some of this stuff recently. I'm trying to find out more about it. At school, we were taught the histories of Kings and Queens, battles for sovereignty and conquest. We weren't taught the histories of real people, of our people (I'm reminded of the sadly unfunny joke about Black History Month: that the other 11 months are White History Month. In Scotland, every month is Rich History Month). A good chunk of the kids in my class were the children of miners or steelworkers, or probably the descendents of miners at the very least. Until an Act of Parliament in 1799, it was legal for mine owners to seize beggars, orphans, and poor children and put them to work as mine workers in indentured servitude.

I understand I could be on potentially shaky ground here; there are revisionists who try to devalue the impact of the trade in black slaves on America and the rest of the world by pointing out the existence of white slaves. That's not what I'm about. Two hundred years on America still hasn't "gotten over" slavery and I don't think it ever can or will. There have been apologies, reparations, and affirmative action, but it won't ever be enough. The damage done to black America starting with slavery and continuing through to the Civil Rights era and beyond has inflicted such profound damage that the country is going to be feeling the effects of it for the next century at least. Maybe a black president will change things for the better, who knows. Barack Obama is only a man, and a young man at that. I'm no Democrat—I don't even vote—but I would love to see him given a chance.

I was thinking about race a lot while I was home. Scotland's getting more and more diverse, which is just wonderful to see. However, I don't think I've ever heard more casual racism (from family and friends even!) than I did on this trip. Is this an instinctive reaction to the perceived threat of inundation? It's the insidious, cheerful sort of racism, from people who mean absolutely no harm but through ignorance can't seem to see that their words and prejudices are hurtful and wrong. Like the friend of my mother's who reports that she's going to have to curb her racist language because her son is engaged to a Brazilian girl, but doesn't understand why she has to stop saying Paki, because after all, the fiancé is Brazilian, not Pakistani. *Sláinte!*

PO Box 22971, Oakland, CA 94609, allan@droput.cc

I'VE GOT YOU COVERED

I was trying to think of a lighter topic to write about this time—one that didn't involve navel-gazing or outrage about the issues of the day. Hell, it's early January as I write this and the Iowa presidential caucuses are going on and all I can think is

there's going to another ten months of this shit—a barrage of attack ads, polls that cover the horse race instead of the issues and only concentrate on the pre-ordained "front-runners." Saying that someone's campaign is "over" after one event.

So let's have some fun. At the end of November, I did my second all-covers Sonic Overload show and I think it'll become an annual event since there's no shortage of cover versions. Of course, some could argue that covers are played out, that many are pointless because they just ape the original and add nothing more. Or they come from the endless string of mediocre "tribute" packages or all-covers albums by the artist, usually an indication that said artist has run out of ideas. In fact, when I did those shows, I purposely omitted those types of albums from consideration.

But after doing that show and the recent year-end one as well, I thought it might be fun to write about some of my favorite cover versions, mainly by punk and hardcore bands. On the year-end show, I played the Hex Dispensers' version of Gary Numan's "Down In The Park," where they strip Numan's ethereal new wave arrangement down to its three chord essence delivered with fuzzy aplomb. It's one of my favorite covers in recent memory. My selections here will by no means be exhaustive, but just some favorites that immediately come to mind.

The Dickies were pretty great at punked-up cover versions. In fact, they had an entire covers album later on, but I'll just stick with songs from the first pair of albums. They have a way of stamping their own personality on a cover, making it their own and that's the case, first and foremost, with their version of the Moody Blues' "Nights In White Satin," distilling the orchestrated pomp of the original into a speedy raver. They did the same with Black Sabbath's "Paranoid." In fact, that cover made me a Sabbath fan. I got their 10" white vinyl EP with *Paranoid* when I was a freshman in college. Our floor's resident Sabbath-head, Bob The Wizard, heard the Dickies' version and commented that it was too fast, that I needed to hear the original. Which I did soon after and, while it never soured my affection for the Dickies' version, it did open my ears to a band I'd sadly neglected up until that point. That EP even had a cover of a song that never really existed—"You Drive Me Ape, You Big Gorilla," which was lifted from an episode of *Leave It To Beaver*. Beav had joined a record club and was all excited that "You Drive Me Ape" would be one of the next records to arrive. I don't think Ward or June would have approved of the Dickies' song. The Dickies enjoyed going back to their youth for the cover versions, be it "She" by the Monkees or themes from the kiddie TV shows "Gigantor" and "Banana Splits."

Their contemporaries the Rezillos grew up on the same trashy culture and did fun versions of the Dave Clark Five's "Glad All Over," Gerry & The Pacemakers' "I Like It" and, especially, "Somebody's Gonna Get Their Head Kicked In Tonight," which, as I pointed out a few columns ago, was originally done by a Fleetwood Mac jokey side project called Earl Vince and the Valiants, although everyone probably thought the Rezillos penned it. Also from the '77 crop, I always liked the Damned's wanton shredding of the Beatles' "Help" and the Stooges. "1970," retitled "I Feel Alright" on "Damned Damned Damned." The Clash covered a lot of songs—the best known are probably the Equals' "Police On My Back," Junior Murvin's "Police and Thieves" and the Bobby Fuller Four's "I Fought The Law," but I was always partial to their reverential treatment of Willie Williams' "Armagidion Time."

There have been plenty of inspired cover versions by, for want of a better term, garage-punk-rock 'n' roll bands. Teengenerate absolutely wailed on Big Joe Turner's "Shake Rattle and Roll," wrapped in that lo-fi wall of thunder they utilized. New Bomb Turks turned Wire's "Mr. Suit" on its ass with a slowed-down version and also laid waste to the Nubs' KBD classic "Job." Obscure Texas punks the Distractors dismembered Huey Piano Smith's '50s-era song "Don't You Just Know It" into something that sounds like a bad day in a day-care center. Suicide Kings, a predecessor to the Humpers, bashed and walloped away on Larry Williams' "Bad Boy" (the Beatles' version may be more familiar). The Didjits sweated out the oldies for Little Richard's "Lucille," with Rick Sims' piercing yelps for the chorus. They also did a pretty good job on the MC5's "Call Me Animal." Of course, the Didjits themselves got covered when the Offspring did "Killboy Powerhead" on *Smash*, which sold a million-zillion copies and helped give Mr. Sims a bit of financial security—which he damn well deserved, since I always thought the Didjits were highly underappreciated. Also on the early rock 'n roll tip, two bands did rip-roaring covers of the Coasters' "Charlie Brown"—Voodoo Glow Skulls (probably the only song you ever need to hear by them) and the Burnt.

Every Thanksgiving, it's mandatory that I play Ill Repute's cover of the Raiders' 1971 smash "Indian Reservation," which they re-titled "Cherokee Nation." Staying with some earlier hardcore covers, the FU's did a great job with "Green Beret," altering the lyrics just a wee bit ("you better talk and do it fast/or I'll shoot a rocket up your ass/Killing gooks is fucking cool/we're Green Berets/We're fucking cool"). When I saw them do that song live in 1982, at the point where Sox yells "hit the beach!" a wave of guys charged from the back of the stage and dove into the crowd. A classic Boston hardcore moment.

I have to admit having a fondness for a kitschy novelty approach on occasion—the Silicon Teens' synth-blip cover of John Fred and the Playboys' "Judy In Disguise," Baby Buddha's oddball synth-inflected take on Tammy Wynette's "Stand By Your Man" or Flying Lizards' minimalist deconstruction of Barrett Strong's "Money" and Eddie Cochran's "Summertime Blues." The Lizards' tracks featured a bored-sounding female basically doing a rote recitation of the lyrics. Devo's version of the Stones' "Satisfaction" is probably familiar to most readers here and it's another example of a band putting their own mark on a classic tune. I think you could even look at Celtic Frost's cover of Wall Of Voodoo's "Mexican Radio" as something of a novelty. Even if it's not, it's memorable with Tom G. Warrior's "oofs" livening things up. Another cover that may not quite fall into novelty territory but is still humorous is Scrotum Grinder's version of Slapshot's "No Friend Of Mine," where the guitar/bass/drums gnash is accompanied by horns and kazoos (!).

Still, there are definitely songs on which there should be a cover moratorium, not only on record but live as well. These include songs from the first Negative Approach EP (the world does *not* need any more covers of "Ready To Fight"), "Ace of Spades" by Motörhead, "Surrender" by Cheap Trick or "We're Not Gonna Take It" by Twisted Sister. In fact, while Twisted Sister doesn't really have many other songs worth covering, there are plenty of quality Motörhead and Cheap Trick songs that bands could attempt. Hell, the Tricksters themselves did wonders with the Move's "California Man," even adding a bit from "Brontosaurus" in the middle (they later covered the latter song itself).

And, in closing, there's this godawful band called Gallows who covered the Ruts' "Staring At The Rude Boys" or "Bois" as they spell it. They also change around

some of the lyrics. Where the fuck did this band come from? I can't even remember how I found out about their cover, but I saw the video on YouTube and, honest to god, right in the middle of it is some hip-hop guy named Lethal Bizzle, being "that guy," i.e. sporting his own t-shirt. He fucking *raps* over part of the song. I mean, when Helmet and House Of Pain hooked up for "Just Another Victim" on the *Judgment Night* soundtrack, that was fine. This ain't. I found out more about Gallows when they popped up in *Rolling Stone* (yes, I read it—deal with it). They're on Epitaph in the US and Brett Gurewitz gushes, "these guys are the most important band to come out of punk rock in quite some time." The *New Musical Express* declared that 2007 was *"the year punk broke again."* Give me a fuckin' break, already…

END OF A YEAR

No, this segment isn't about Embrace's album or about how I was completely obsessed with those recordings ca. '88. Shit, I remember listening to a tape of it when Ellen and I were being driven from our wedding ceremony to the reception. That's how pathetic that obsession was. Fortunately, we're still married. Hell, that's even after all the loud, obnoxious music she has to put up with. Or after I'd do my best Ian MacKaye imitation when singing along. Incidentally, the greatest Ian impression I ever heard was from Kenny Inouye of Marginal Man. That was over 20 years ago and I can still picture him doing it at an old friend's apartment in DC.

I used to play Embrace's song "End Of A Year" on my year end radio show, until a few years ago, when I decided to switch to the more upbeat-sounding "New Year" by SVT (from '79, although if you listen closely to the lyrics on that song, they ain't so upbeat. Not with the theme of how every new year is the same and if you want to "make money in this world you've got to bend over for executive rule." That record's almost 30 years old but the theme is timeless.

With that meaningless sidebar, let me get to the obligatory year-end roundup for 2007. In all honesty, it wasn't all that remarkable a year. There were only a handful of records that I'd put into the "great" category. Not that the year was a washout and I definitely found plenty worth listening to but, in all honesty, I spent a lot of time loading up my MP3 player with both old and new stuff and organizing my files on there. The music I spent the most time listening to, when not in review mode, came out roughly between the early-'70s to mid-'80s. That covers my pre-punk adolescence and then various punk, post-punk and hardcore that followed.

I suppose that most of the records on my list could be loosely be classified as old-school hardcore punk. A lot of it falls into the "good but not great" category and I suppose that's what I mean when I say the year was unremarkable. I'm always looking for different permutations of punk, hardcore, garage, metal and other elements that sound fresh, that sound vibrant, that move me in some way and that *stick* with me. A lot of the time, I'll listen to something for a bit and file it away. There have only been a handful of records this year that I keep coming back to. And that's why I'm more inclined to listen to older stuff.

Still, this was a good year for seeing live bands, both at home in Boston and on the "punk rock road trips" I took to Richmond, for the No Way Records fest and to Pittsburgh for two nights of shows celebrating the marriage of my pals Rachel Courtney and Bill Chamberlain from The Pist and Caustic Christ. Locally, while there was the typical coming and going of basement spaces, things are on the upswing. The most promising space to come along in awhile is the warehouse space The Ratscellar. It's not a typical basement space. There's a stage and PA and it comfortably holds over 100 people and they also have a recording studio. About 45 minutes from Boston, in Haverhill, is Welfare Records. Welfare is situated in a two story building that houses a record store, recording studio and, downstairs, a show space that holds a few hundred people. Completely DIY. They've also got a recording studio in there, as well.

So, before getting to the best-of list, a few more notes. Double Negative was the best band I saw this year and put out the best record. One of the things I like about them is they range in age from their mid-30s to early-40s and don't look like a bunch of old men trying to recapture past glories. There's definitely a lot of early COC in their sound and that makes sense since they're from Raleigh but that's not an overplayed style and Double Negative add their own elements to it. Also, the Brain Handle album was released in a quantity of 300 copies in '07 and I don't even own a copy myself, just audio files. A new pressing is due on No Way Records in the not-too-distant future. Without further ado…

12"/LP/CD: DOUBLE NEGATIVE-The Wonderful and Frightening World Of, BRAIN HANDLE-s/t, BROKEN NEEDLE-s/t, B.U.S.H.-New American Century, CLUSTERFUCK-How The West Was Won, CONVERSIONS-Prisoners' Inventions, CRAWLERS-s/t, THE DAILY VOID-s/t, EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING-s/t, HEX DISPENSERS-s/t, KNIFE FIGHT-Crisis, KVOTERINGEN-Bister Prognos, LOOK BACK AND LAUGH-State Of Illusion, PUNCH IN THE FACE-At War With Everybody, REPERCUSSIONS-11 Song EP, SKITKIDS-Besöket Vid Krubban, STREET TRASH-Into The Wasteland, TOTALITAR-Vi Ar Eliten, VIOLENT MINDS-Eyes Of Death

7": ACID REFLUX-s/t, CATBURGLARS-Holy Shit EP, 86 MENTALITY-Final Exit, KYLMÄ SOTA-s/t, NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE-s/t, NITAD-s/t, SEX/VID-Tania, SINKS-s/t, STRAIGHTJACKET NATION-6 song EP, TERMINAL STATE-Sick, TOTAL ABUSE-Sex Pig, WASTED TIME-No Shore

DEMOS (kind of neglected these this year—sorry): BAD ADVICE/GUILTY FACES

BEST LIVE: American Cheesburger, Annihilation Time, Armitage Shanks, Brain Handle, Breakfast, Career Suicide, Conversions, Criminal Damage, Double Negative, 86 Mentality, Government Warning, Inmates, Look Back and Laugh, Out Cold, Pist, Sex/Vid, Social Cirkcle, The State, The Vicious, Waste Management

FINALLY, RECENT RELEASES OF NOTE

I have to begin this section with a new CD from SKITKIDS, *Beskövet Vid Krubban* (Not Enough, Sofiagatan 13, 214 45 Malmö, SWEDEN, www.notenough.hardcore-punk.se). Hot on the heels of their recent split with Nightmare comes this 7-song ripper. Motörhead-ized amphetamine savagery coupled with Dis-inspired hardcore. Locomotive tempos that seldom waver, except for the more-pounding "Visste Jag Lycklig." In other words, these guys bring it. I've seen music of this style (in fact, many styles) dissected and analyzed until the differences are petty and enter the realm of geekdom. I don't need to write a two page dissertation. Just crank it loud, get mesmerized by the brawn and power and marvel at how well the shit-hot metal licks enhance the experience, without devolving into wankery. I got this a few days before compiling my "best of" list and, after just a few listens, I knew it had to be on there.

The recent crop of releases on Sorry State Records (1102 N. Greensboro St., Carrboro, NC 27501, www.sorrystaterecords.com) yields some winners. I remem-

ber someone had an *MRR* column called "In Praise of Generic Thrash" or something like that. Well, the self-titled EP by BORED TO DEATH deserves that that kind of praise. This is standard US style thumpa-thumpa thrash, for the most part, by this Japanese band. The cheesy 7 Seconds-ish "whoaaa-oh-oh" during the chorus of "I Don't Care" makes me smile, as does the sputtering guitar solo on "Borderline." None of these four guys look as though they're old enough to shave yet (well, the drummer has sideburns) and their boisterousness is endearing.

Meanwhile, on their *Ancient Rites* EP, CROSS LAWS provide another dose of no-bullshit hardcore with an old-school feel. As always, it's tough to come up with nuanced descriptions but I'd argue there's a Midwestern feel here—Articles of Faith's flail, for instance. "The Relic" made me think of a rougher version of that band's "American Dreams," for instance. In other words, there's rawness but also a hint of melody in the guitar playing. Guitarist Daniel Lupton runs Sorry State and this fits in perfectly with the type of records he generally releases. If I could offer one minor point of criticism, it'd be the playing is sloppy from time to time but not to the point where things fall apart.

Finally, the North Carolina trio CROSSED EYES take a page from the likes of the Observers and The Vicious. It's a semi-poppy/semi-nervy take on '77 era punk only Crossed Eyes aren't as mannered-sounding in the vocal department. The lyrics have a sardonic quality—taking on self-righteous white guilt for "Broke Bike," for instance. Other songs are about seeing through phoniness and fakery, as well—then retreating back home or to the nearest bar. The songs bash along nicely with a surging hookiness and the lower fidelity (though *not* lo-fi) recording quality works to their advantage.

A few months ago, I reviewed the Lets Grow album on the German label Thrashbastard ((Warschauer Str. 57, 10243 Berlin, GERMANY, thrashxbastard@yahoo.de). I finally caught up with some of the other records that came in that package. DEPRESSIVE STATE's *Total Annihilation* EP offers mid-paced stuff straddling the line between hardcore and piledriving rock—not RAWK, but a surging/stinging element punctuated with beefy guitars and irritable vocals. The name of the band and EP, along with the tortured-looking soul on the cover indicates an overriding negativity about people, about life and that fits here, culminating in a burst of rain that ends up in a locked groove—endless unless you lift the needle.

On THIS SHIP WILL BURN's *Servant Of Servants* EP, you'll find fired-up up punk/rock 'n' roll with inherent melody. Along the lines of early Fucked Up and I also hear a hint of late-'80s DC but *without* any sense of whininess—in other words, there's emotional content, especially for "So Frowned The Mighty Combatants." Vocals are conveyed with an impassioned roughness and I'll even give the soul-baring lyrics a pass. It's a good mesh of burn with tuneful inclinations. Finally, from Croatia comes the self-titled EP by VASELINE CHILREN. Double-speed hardcore with harsh vocals and the songs have a viciousness but it doesn't always hold together that well. The best song by far is the more reasonably-paced "Nothing To Give." Their hearts are in the right place and I concur completely with the words to "E-Bay Punks Fuck Off," but this ultimately isn't too hot.

For some complete sickness from Finland, how about the self-titled EP by KYLMÄ SOTA (Raakanaama, 23 E 53, Turku, FINLAND, www.raakanaama.fi)? Another record that made the best-of list. Four blazing tracks of raw D-beat thrash done in an appropriately over-the-top fashion. No lyric sheet, songs in Finnish but there's no missing the anger or outrage expressed by their vocalist Ronnie—and his bandmates are Breznev (sic), Maggie and JFK—clever. Familiar terrain and planting some musical landmines. OK, I'll stop now. Just track this down.

Let's hop over to Italy from Finland for the *Pig City Life* EP by ANTI YOU (Punks Before Profits, PO Box 1148, Grand Rapids, MI 49501, www.myspace.com/punksbeforeprofits), A one-sided EP, cramming seven short hardcore blasts on there. These guys mine the early-'80s quarry and hit paydirt. And, for all the US influences, their cover choice is Discharge's *Hear Nothing See Nothing Say Nothing*, peeling away the overpowering bombast to something effectively stripped down. Succinct rage.

Also on PBP, there's a split 7" featuring FUCK THIS and THE STATE. Fuck This include Claire and Ryan from PBF—he was also in I Object until recently. Fast hardcore punk with twin vocals and not too developed yet plus the vocals are kind of a liability at this point, as well. One of the songs, "Stay Depressed," deals with medications for mental illness and Ryan writes that he has issues with that since it can be used as a form of behavior control. Not the typical hardcore theme. The State, meanwhile, are back with three more agitated songs, keeping up the momentum started on the "All Wrong" album. The lyrics exude the same sort of skepticism/cynicism about politicians and just how free people remain in this country. The record was held up due to some problems with the original sleeve, although the foldout poster that accompanies this one is still quite provocative—a sieg-heiling Jesus overlooking a morass of carnage and Nazi imagery and Dubya is riding in the staff car.

From the west coast, ECOLI have unleashed a vicious self-titled 7" EP (Stress Domain, PO Box 55352, Valencia, CA 91385-5352, www.stressdomainrecords.tk). A piercing signal of feedback hovers over the band's frantic hardcore punk, bridging one song to the next and tearing off a few nasty leads. While the emphasis is on thrash-a-mania, the playing navigates time changes and the like very well. Drawing from the well of Void, Poison Idea and Black Flag but still making their own type of noise. Some vivid lyrical phrases, as well—*"my head feels like some fucking rat's asshole"* on "Social Anxiety." I'm not sure what thought process conjured that up but it meshes well with the band's heart-racing onslaught.

EVERYTHING FALLS APART provide another session of agitation therapy on their new EP, *Tension* (Art Of The Underground, PO Box 250, Buffalo, NY 14205, www.artoftheunderground.com). A howl from the innards—Pat's voice conveys the pain and anger and there's also an aggressive musical punch in the gut, if I can be alliterative for a moment. This isn't as thrashed out as their first EP and it misses a bit of the roughness in production but the songs still pack a mid-to-fast paced wallop.

IN DEFENCE have released their first full-length, *Don't Know How To Breakdance* (Get Outta Town, PO Box 4094, Winter Park, FL 32793-4094, www.getouttatownrecords.com) and it's definitely the best material by far from this Minneapolis hardcore band. Superior production, without being overdone, and they've got an ass-kicking approach. Surging speed and circle storm breakdowns and Ben barks out the vocals with authority, given plenty of backing. There's definitely a youth crew vibe at times but they keep the punk in there and there's also plenty of wit and not much preachiness. OK, "I Eat Kids" urges people to avoid eating meat in pretty strong terms. Still, these songs come across as positive,

without the cheesiness. If "Boombox Crew," with a "Straight Edge Revenge" type vibe, doesn't get you stomping around, you're probably dead. No breakdancing necessary—circle pits will suffice.

5" releases are a pain in the ass to play and store but you shouldn't miss the DEATHCYLE/HOLY MOUNTAIN split (Gloom Records, 1463 Ocean Ave., Apt. 2B, Brooklyn, NY 11230, www.gloomrecords.com). After adjusting the return function on my turntable, I was able to get this to play and it's worth the trouble. Deathcycle's song, "Ten Years Later," sounds like a heavier, bare-knuckled version of the Dead Boys' "Sonic Reducer" and Ron's vocals have a pissed-off urgency. The Holy Mountain's "Birth" is a piledriving piece of blitz-speed crust and Dan's vocals are equally pained. Limited to 425 copies, one time press, etc., etc.

Next, there are three releases from Chicago, different species of the punk beast belonging to the same genus. I'll start with the second EP from THE CATBURGLARS, *You May Be Dumb, But I Don't Care* (Cowabunga, 195-D S. Armstrong Way, Upland, CA 91786, www.cowabunga-rex.tk). Some of these guys used to be in hardcore bands Def Choice and Get It Away but this is completely different. Straight-up garage/punk/rock 'n' roll with a snotty, humorous approach. There's something of a Pedestrians mid-tempo sturdiness, as well. The exception is their cover of the Zeros' "Don't Push Me Around," which is handled well (though it won't make my list of best covers). They have another 7", *Holy Shit*, that came out around the start of '07 on the Tooth Decay label—that EP favors a rougher sound and, is actually somewhat better than this one but both are recommended and meant to be played at a loud volume.

Meanwhile, there's some serious head-fucking by THE DAILY VOID on their debut album (Dead-Beat, PO Box 361392, Cleveland, OH 44136, www.dead-beat-records.com). Their brand of obnoxiousness comes from a nervy, artsy, minimalist '77 inspiration. Most of these guys were in the Functional Blackouts and this is a tad more accessible. Of course, everything's relative when it comes to accessibility and it'll still be noise to the squares—would you have it any other way? All you need to know is the songs here will worm their way into your skull with their gnashing, bashing assault and the frayed string bending generates sparks.

Finally, there's the debut, self-titled album by COCOCOMA on the choice Goner label (2152 Young Ave., Memphis, TN 38104, www.goner-records.com). More of a traditional garage style and the Farfisaization effect is fully present. Actually, Mike Fitzpatrick doubles on organ and bass and Bill Roe handles both drums and lead vocals—no easy feat. Vibrant, lively and catchy and they're not above a clever nick or two—such as the "ah-ah-ah"s for "Go Ahead" that sound quite a bit like the same harmonies from Cheap Trick's "Lookout." Drawing from the '60s but still managing to sound contemporary. I totally regret missing this band when they came through town last year.

Al Quint, PO Box 2746, Lynn, MA 01903
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One of my many contradictions, from a Marxist perspective, is that I'm a wimpy, waffling agnostic, not a hardcore, commie atheist. The reason I'm an agnostic instead of an atheist has nothing to do with finding flaws in atheism's arguments against the existence of God, or with finding redeeming features in the horror show that is religion. I'm undecided about whether or not God exists because, throughout my life, I've had personal experiences that might be described as spiritual, mystical, even religious.

I've had these experiences since I was a kid, long before the psychedelic drug use of my hippie days. A momentary, overwhelming sensation that I was a part of everything, and that everything was a part of me. A fleeting, all pervasive feeling that I had suddenly risen high above this mundane, everyday existence. The inexplicable awareness that I had briefly stumbled upon some greater reality, the true, scintillating reality behind this dingy, decaying façade that was life. I've had these experiences well after I stopped doing psychedelics. As for the psychedelics—acid, mescaline, psilocybin—they produced quasi-mystical experiences forcefully driven, selectively amplified, and seriously distorted by the chemicals in question.

I was loosely raised Catholic, though I don't associate my childhood spiritual incidents with Roman Catholicism. My parents wanted me to get the sacraments up to Confirmation, just in case the Big Guy was Catholic. I was on my own after that, and I never bothered to go back to church. I've never tried to cultivate these mystical moments by pursuing a spiritual practice or, Marx forbid, an organized religion either. I simply experienced them, marveling at many of them, enduring the rest, and getting something out of them all. Of course, I've come to my own understanding of what Tom Wolfe, in *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*, referred to as the *kairos*, the how and why and what-for of this "time out of time," this "most propitious moment."

The how is simple enough. The actual experience, no doubt, is biochemically based, a natural, internal analog to the psychedelic drugs I experimented with during the early-1970s. That said, establishing such a cause-and-effect doesn't reduce the spiritual event to a biochemical phantom, nor does it relegate the whole episode to some mechanical, materially determined process. To grasp why this is the case, we need to delve into a little bit of Marxism, in particular, Marx's notion of dialectical materialism.

For Marx, the economic base of society gives rise to a superstructure comprised of society's legal and political structures, as well as of the "higher ideologies of the art, religion and philosophy of *bourgeois* society," as Karl Korsch described it in *Marxism and Philosophy*. Yet, just because the social superstructure is a product of the economic base does not make it any less real. "[Marx and Engels] always treated ideologies—including philosophy—as concrete realities and not as empty fantasies." "[I]t is essential for modern dialectical materialism to grasp philosophies and other ideological systems in theory as realities, and to treat them in practice as such." What's more, society's political and ideological superstructure achieves a measure of autonomy to act back upon the economic base to change it, creating a dialectical relationship between the two that defines "bourgeois society as a totality." Or as Marx himself put it in the *Introduction to a Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*: "Theory itself becomes a material force

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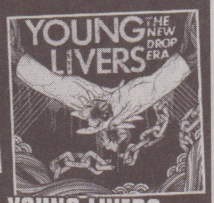

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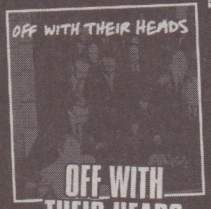

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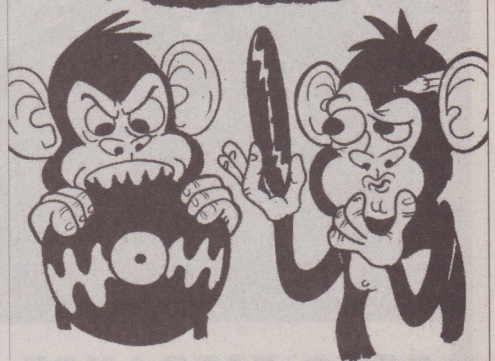

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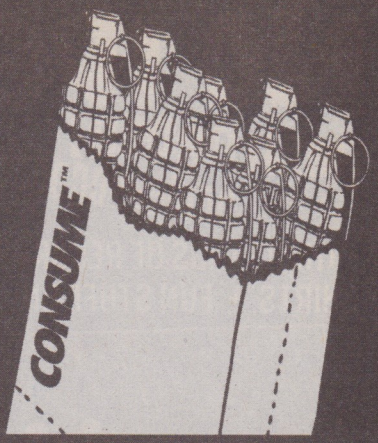

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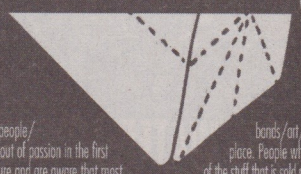

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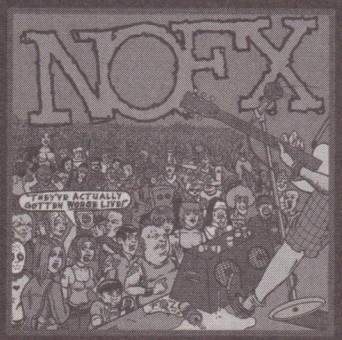

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once it takes hold on the masses. Theory is capable of taking hold on the masses... once it becomes radical."

This clearly distinguishes dialectical materialism from the crude materialism of Newtonian science, in which one billiard ball hits another in a simple linear chain of causality. I'd argue that dialectical materialism is much more akin to the systems and information theories pioneered by Gregory Bateson in the areas of psychology, biology and ecology. But how does dialectical materialism relate to my discussion of personal spiritual experiences?

In contending that mystical moments have a biochemical basis, similar to the endorphin high produced by vigorous exercise, I'm not refuting the reality of these events. No doubt, all individual thought and feeling can be traced back to biochemistry, yet it cannot be denied that these thoughts and feelings frequently have material effects and consequences in that we act on them. In the same way, human interest in and pursuit of spiritual experience spurs activities intended to reproduce and refine those experiences, generating on the one hand spiritual practices like yoga, meditation, chanting, and ecstatic dancing, and on the other hand the practices, institutions and ideologies of organized religion.

This isn't to repudiate the fact that society's economic base leaves profound marks on spiritual practice and organized religion, only to assert that the initial impulse for both resides elsewhere. Nor would I be surprised to learn that millennia of spiritual and religious activity, in turn, have acted upon this biochemical substrate to distill and shape it, and that the two have coevolved over time. The great Gothic cathedrals of the Middle Ages, like Notre Dame or Chartre, can be appreciated, in part, as finely tuned machinery incorporating a variety of spiritual technologies designed to induce mystical experiences in the participating individuals. While the triggers for spiritual episodes are often social and cultural then, their impetus is transhistorical, imbedded in that problematic realm known as human nature. The instances of spontaneous, unbidden spiritual awakening, some resulting in the founding of entirely new religions, bear this out. The capacity for mystical experience seems to be hardwired to some degree into most of us, perhaps as a peculiar expression of the wider human pursuit of altered states through drug use, artistic endeavor, SM, asceticism, exercise and sport. The question is, why? What function does it serve?

Marx posited a kind of human nature in asserting that we are social beings, a concept covered by the hotly debated term species being. You can be sure that human sociality and spirituality are keenly related within the context of species being. That there is overlap between spirituality, sexuality and power also goes without saying. The spiritual experience is often described as fiery, capable of reducing all that is false to ash. In its crucible is forged the certainty of individual belief and the unity so necessary for social cohesion. I'm not sure what Marx thought about individual spiritual practice, but his views on the rituals, churches, traditions, theologies and holy wars of organized religion are well known:

The foundation of irreligious criticism is: Man makes religion, religion does not make man. Religious suffering is, at one and the same time, the expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people. The abolition of religion as the illusory *happiness of the people is the demand for their* real *happiness.*

Gotta love those dialectics. That religion in *bourgeois* society serves to delude, comfort and pacify the masses doesn't tell us much more about the function of the more elemental mystical moment however. Aside from acting as a kind of experiential superglue for personal belief and social unity, there's another aspect to spiritual episodes that's worth discussing.

First, let's talk a little bit about consciousness. Human consciousness arises from a very small number of neural circuits in the brain that monitor the rest of the mind, and the body. Given that consciousness relies on a small percentage of gray matter to function, it cannot possibly be all encompassing, and the scope of human awareness is thus severely limited. With regard to sensory perception, for instance, we are flooded with sensory information all the time, yet our conscious mind is only aware of a small fraction of that information. As an example, our clothing is in constant contact with the skin under it, stimulating our sense of touch over a wide area of our body. We're not conscious of everywhere our clothing touches our skin though. We feel our clothes only in certain places, particularly when they impinge or restrict us. Therefore, the sensory input from the rest of our skin in contact with our clothes is filtered out of our awareness. Aside from purely biological filters, there are also cultural, social and personal filters that further restrict this torrential sensory flow.

We receive, and process, vast amounts of sensory data on many levels other than the conscious. Aldous Huxley proposed, in *The Doors of Perception*, that psychedelic drugs temporarily knock out these filters so that we experience heightened sensory impressions, even forms of synesthesia. Whether or not this is the case, the overwhelming influx of sense perception that comes in under the radar of consciousness does have other interesting side effects.

Sometimes, bits and pieces of this unconscious sense data percolate up into an individual's awareness. The result is a hunch, an intuitive feeling, which cannot be pinned down to anything obvious. When patterns begin to emerge through this process, something quite innocuous can trigger a sudden, epiphanal moment. Then we say "everything fell into place," "the scales fell from my eyes," "all was revealed," and "I saw things as they truly were."

I'm intentionally using quasi-religious phrasing here in anticipation of my next point. There is a certain category of spiritual experience known as "the road to Damascus" moment, when the mystical episode bowls over the individual and literally changes his or her life. Paul, of the New Testament, had a profound religious awakening on his way to Damascus, and went from being a Jewish persecutor of Christians to a Christian believer. Paul's personal sense of his place in the scheme of things radically shifted in an instant. Perhaps this kind of spiritual experience is like a hunch on steroids.

What I'm postulating is that certain life-changing mystical incidents act on the deepest levels of human perception, our sense of ourselves and of our place in the universe. None of my spiritual experiences were ever that profound, though I always learned something from them. That all such spiritual moments come permeated with a sense of the supernatural Other, what we interpret as the sacred and the divine and call God, is what gives me pause. Ultimately, it's why I can't declare myself an atheist.

BBC-TV did a movie, *Longford*, about the English aristocrat and prison reformer who became involved with one of Britain's most notorious criminals, child-killer Myra Hindley. Hindley gets one of the film's better lines, the implications of which would fill another column. I'll close on the character Myra's words. "Evil can be a spiritual experience too."

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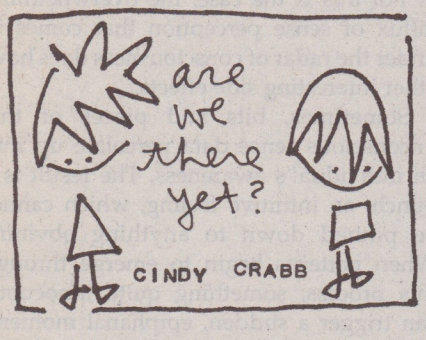


Anarchism Is. A Multiple-Choice Quiz.

1. Anarchism is:
A. The belief that people are capable of governing themselves.
B. The belief in total chaos.
C. The belief that we can live in freedom, without oppression or domination, in community and in harmony with the rest of the natural world.
D. The belief that we just have to fight for the apoca-rev (that's short for the apocalypse/revolution) and then who knows what.
E. All of the above.

2. You can find anarchists:
A. Spray-painting anarchy signs behind grocery stores.
B. Wiggling uncomfortably in their chairs at incredibly long meetings.
C. Standing around looking cool and getting wasted.
D. Teaching in high schools, elementary schools and colleges; growing food in the country and in the cities; working within non-profits to try and minimize the harm caused by the racistpatriarchicalcaptialist system; working to help people heal their trauma; writing zines, playing music, taking care of their families; working to start militant movements, or any real movement at all; going about their normal lives, never having heard of anarchism, but knowing in their hearts that there's got to be a way to live that's not so soul-sucking, some way without oppression and numbness, some way more compassionate and cooperative and sustaining.
E. All of the above.

3. Anarchists believe that our biggest enemy is:
A. The Christians.
B. The Liberals.
C. The Corporations.
D. Other Anarchists whose ideological differences are miniscule.
E. The end of active citizenship.
F. The way that people have been conditioned to see themselves as separate from nature, and to believe that the natural world is here for humans to use and exploit.
G. The cop inside our heads.
H. All of the above.

4. Anarchists believe social change will happen when:
A. We violently overthrow the government, like, based on the Kronstad uprising, the Spanish Civil War, and the Paris Commune.
B. We create counter institutions to take care of our various communities' basic needs.
C. We all get to do whatever we want whenever we want.
D. We learn a new ethics based on mutual aid and from each according to their ability to each according to their need.
E. We stop fucking around and start really committing ourselves to working with all our heart and soul and time to make social change happen.
F. All of the above.

5. You can tell who's an anarchist because:
A. They wear black and are really cliquey.
B. They talk all the time about Kronstad and the Spanish Civil War.
C. They are out in the world doing inspiring radical things, breaking us out of our complacency, and actually making concrete changes.
D. They work really hard at a project and then give up.
E. All of the above.

6. Anarchism is still relevant today because:
A. The apoca-rev is coming, so we gotta know our shit and be ready.
B. Authoritarian social change movements have proven to be ultimately corrupting, and this history has proven that our only real chance is to organize along non-hierarchical lines, which is mostly what things have been leaning toward anyway.
C. It is flexible.
D. It has a really powerful and rich history.
E. All of the above.

Answers= 1+2=E, 3+4=F, 5+6=E.

don't try

by dave

Spending a few weeks back in the Bay Area at the end of the year, I managed to make it on New Years Eve to Slims in San Francisco to see the Melvins. First up that night was Triclops!, the newish Bay Area band featuring MRR's John No on vocals. The band is getting ready to release an LP on Alternative Tentacles (full disclosure, I work there) and the crowd was still largely filing in as they began. They played a killer set of technically proficient prog-punk weirdness with John getting in people's faces and writhing around on the ground as he's prone to do. Great fucking band.

Comets On Fire, the San Francisco-by-way-of-Santa-Cruz group whose last two Sub Pop released albums have made them darlings of the hipster crowd played next. The fact is, Comets On Fire plays a spot-on mash-up of Blue Cheer-style amp worship and more psyched-out jams that can be hit or miss live—but on this night, it hit dead on. It'd been about three years since I last saw them play, and in that time the band has toured all over and have become rock solid while maintaining their raw and gritty style. Guitarists Ethan Miller and Ben Chasny seem to have an unspoken dialogue with their playing and drummer Utrillo makes a lot of noise with a kit smaller than the average punk band's.

But the main reason everyone came out is for the Melvins. The Melvins have been doing their thing for a very long time and have outlived trends and fads ten times over. Their albums have sometimes missed, but they've always done something interesting—different and challenging—and continue to do so presently. On New Year's Eve they played in their latest four-piece incarnation, which fuses Buzz and Dale with the dudes from Big Business, Coady Willis (ex-Murder City Devils) and Jared Anderson (ex-Karp, Tight Bros.).

With this lineup, the set consisted largely of songs from the one album released by this lineup, 2006's *(A) Senile Animal*. The songs make good use of the two-drummer lineup and also utilize Jared's interesting vocal range to contrast with Buzz's. Watching Coady and Dale play together is a thing of beauty, something for Kylesa to aspire to with their (also great) two-drum-

mer lineup perhaps. The band paused momentarily for Jared to lead the countdown to 2008, and then quickly resumed. They ended their set with an a Capella rendering of "The Star Spangled Banner," followed by Jared leading a chorus of "Glory Glory Hallelujah!" It's been said before but I'll say it again in agreement—the Melvins are the best rock band alive.

The end of the year and the beginning of a new one is typically a somewhat slow period for new records. Being away from my mailbox for several weeks now, and not having the money to buy new records this month, I'm going to skip on new releases altogether and do a sort of expanded version of the way I've been ending this column in recent months—by revisiting older albums that I think are great. The point of this is not to cover something like Morbid Angel's *Altars Of Madness,* an album that everybody acknowledges is classic, but records that have not necessarily ever been called that, and in fact may not even be considered a band's best, but still are worthy of your attention.

So with that in mind, here we go…

We'll start with America, since these looking-back scenarios often find us in Scandinavia, where this column will inevitably lead. Absu has the distinction of being one of the first second-wave black metal bands from the US, forming in the early-1990s in Texas of all places. Originally a badly corpse-painted full-on black-metal band, their sound took on a steady evolution under the leadership of master drummer Proscriptor McGovern, a dude with such skill on the skins that he was one of the finalists in Slayer's drummer search during one of their open periods. They moved on from satanic themes of evil and took on a lyrical and thematic approach centering around magick and mysticism and Celtic occultism. Absu's 2001 album *Tara,* the last in a trilogy of similarly themed releases, is a blistering assault of combined influences that makes for excellent repeated listening, and I continue to pull this one out regularly many years after its release on Osmose.

The title track, "Tara," opens the record, a two-minute bagpipe intro that paints a picture of vast Irish shores and then launches into "Pillars Of Mercy," a lightning-fast blackthrasher evoking thoughts of Aura Noir and old Dodheimsgard with hints of *Hell Awaits*-era Slayer. Those who find solace in Dave Lombardo's machine-gun rhythms will find much to like in Proscriptor's drumming, and Shaftiel's surgically precise mile-a—minute guitar playing is its perfect complement. The repetitive Mesopotamian riffing on "She Cries the Quiet Lake" would sound as if it had been lifted from Melechesh's massive *Emissaries* LP, if it hadn't been released more than five years earlier.

Absu called it quits after the release of *Tara,* but apparently reformed in 2007, though only Proscriptor remains from the long-running main lineup that also included Shaftiel and Equitant (who also plays in Goreaphobia) on bass. *Tara* is an album well worth your time, as are some of the earlier Absu recordings.

The early '90s brought several prominent and long-running Peaceville doom bands onto the scene. Paradise Lost and My Dying Bride are typically the two that are discussed the most. Paradise Lost's *Gothic* LP stands as a monument in this pantheon, and many fans of this early incarnation of the group think it heretical to vouch for anything after it. Nonetheless, subsequent LPs like *Shades Of God, Icon* and *Draconian Times* are frequently spun at Don't Try headquarters—particularly the criminally underrated *Shades Of God* LP. As for My Dying Bride, the first LP, *As The Flower Withers* is revered among fans of early doom/death and the band went on to make a string of quality albums, sometimes missing but more often than not keeping things heavy as shit as the backbone to their flirtations with evolution. To this day, My Dying Bride is still making completely listenable heavy records.

But one Peaceville band completely lost the scent early in the game—Anathema. In 1993 the UK band released its debut LP, *Serenades*. By 1993, when Anathema began to rise to the prominence they had hinted at with the prior *Crestfallen* EP, Paradise Lost and My Dying Bride were already scene kings and black metal was beginning to take hold of the underground from the stagnating death metal scene.

Serenades came in with a doom/death sound that was oppressively heavy, yet dare I say (and I cringe as I type it) romantic in its application. Songs you might play at some sort of tragic wedding ceremony. A sense of utter sadness and defeat, rather than anger. Complete loss of hope. They didn't sound much at all like Paradise Lost or My Dying Bride.

Tunes like "Lovelorn Rhapsody," "Sweet Tears," and "Sleep In Sanity" exhibit a crushing guitar sound, and vocalist Darren White set the standard for what vocals in this doom style should sound like—low, pained and on the verge of a crying fit. The totally acoustic track "J'ai Fait Une Promesse" has sweet female vocals sung in French—a sort of time out from the heavy tunes that fits perfectly. The musical motifs in each song, combined with the hopeless lyrics, paint an impressionist picture of complete despair. If any one band provided a blueprint for Oakland's Asunder, it was Anathema.

Unfortunately, not long after Crestfallen, Anathema's style took a pretty drastic turn toward an atmospheric rock sound as they did their best to emulate Pink Floyd. I lost interest in the band at that point—it was pretty disappointing after the *Serenades* masterpiece. The CD version of *Serenades* available these days also has the Crestfallen tracks as bonus.

A band that could be said to only be on the fringes of the metal world was the mighty UK beast God. God certainly had elements of Godflesh in its sound, and Justin Broadrick was involved in God as a guitar player and producer, but the driving force behind God was Broadrick's partner in crime in Techno Animal, Kevin Martin.

On the 1994 release *Anatomy Of Addiction,* God explored the sonic terrain of a fucked-up wasteland where industrial, metal, experimental, free jazz, ambient dub, and even hip-hop collide in a big bang of destruction. Perhaps not unlike places Mick Harris has explored with his Scorn project, or John Zorn's Naked City. But the Godflesh-style metal guitars and percussive backbone hold things together so it never fully descends into a complete mess. It's a lot like Godflesh, but with way more going on musically; indeed, the full God lineup consisted of no less than eleven players, including two bassists, two drummers, and two saxophonists. Again, this is really avant-garde shit (at least compared to the normal fare in this column)—like Swans colliding with Peter Brotzmann and Bill Laswell—but in its own way, heavy and frightening as hell. This was released by Big Cat Records in the UK, and several other God albums are worth checking into as well.

Back to Texas again, Solitude Aeternus is one of the best doom bands of all time, playing in the vein of Candlemass; i.e., soaring vocals, brick-heavy guitars playing slow, memorable riffs with trad metal leads, and Rob Lowe's killer vocals. Rob Lowe (not the movie guy) is actually now the vocalist in Candlemass, which shows just how close the two are related—and I'd wager to say that Solitude at its best is equally as good.

Solitude Aeternus' first two killers were released through Roadrunner in the early '90s, back when that label actually still

released decent records. But the album we're concerned with here is 1994's *Through The Darkest Hour,* released by the Pavement label, a traditional doom ripper if ever there was one. It kicks off with what's probably the best song on the album, a song worthy of release as a single, called simply "Falling." A great lead riff, equal parts "stoner" and traditional doom, that eventually leads to the anthemic chorus chant of "Move, You Fall And We Die!" Total metal mastery.

From there on the album continues straight through with no-frills trad doom metal genius like the seven-minute "Pain" and the dirge-like "Eternal (Dreams Part II)." The production is crisp and clean without feeling stale and lets all the instruments shine, and Lowe's vocals are mixed at just the right level.

If I recall, the album wasn't immediately recognized by many at the time, including myself, as traditional doom had taken a back seat to death and black metal in a big way, and in some ways seemed a sort of relic of the past. Yet listening to *Through The Darkest Hour* now, it holds up a lot better nearly 14 years later then many of those same records I thought were so great in '94 (when I was only 17, so obviously my tastes could be questionable at that point).

Finally we go up to Finland, to visit the band Sentenced and one of my favorite records. Most people would expect to read about their album *North From Here,* a great death metal album for sure, but the album I present for your consideration is its quite different follow-up, the oddly titled *Amok* LP.

Take Lee Dorrian circa 1992 and stick him into the lead role in the 1985 version of Queensryche and you're starting to get the picture. Sound like shit? Quite the opposite, actually. This record rips all the way through. There's a ton of amazing, melodic, and just complex enough guitar playing to excite tech dorks, but all the riffs kill and they never lose sight of writing awesome songs. There's definitely a Maiden element to a lot of these tunes.

Lots of great hard rock riffs on this one, like on "Phoenix" which utilizes some well-placed female vocal flourishes. "Forever Lost" is another anthem. My favorite track was sort of an odd-man-out type song called "Funeral Spring." It starts with some funeral bells and leads into a fucked bass riff that's got the wah pedal on overdrive and then busts into some brilliant fucking lead playing that sort of follows together with the bassline. Its laid-back groove is practically doom and coupled with Taneli Jarva's gruff man trying to sing like Lee Dorrian vocals, it's total ear candy. And again, the leads on this track are some of my favorites—they're just blues-based leads, not overly thought-out, but they fit perfectly. I used to play this track on my radio show all the time back in high school.

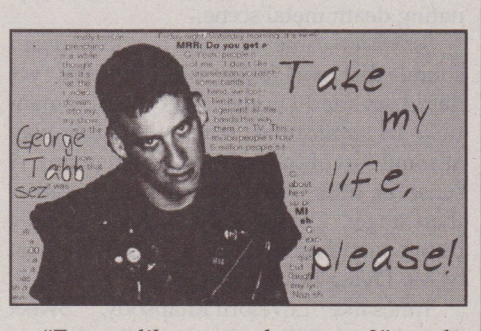
The second half of the album is as good as the first, with more anthems like "Nepenthe" and the killer chorus in "Dance on the Grave (lil Siztah)."

A lot of people labeled this melodic death metal, but it had almost nothing in common with bands usually tagged with that label—horrible shit like In Flames and Dark Tranquility. Sentenced were way more rock-based and not nearly as fast and obsessed with guitar wankery.

I never did understand why people didn't get into this record. Maybe it was too much of a departure from their old sound. After this album, Taneli Jarva quit the band to concentrate more on Impaled Nazarene and eventually formed the kind-of shitty The Black League. And it turned out to be fatal for the band, as although they recorded many more albums and got kind of big biting the Sisters Of Mercy, for me they lost it after *Amok.* Check this shit out, though, and see if I'm right or if I just have shitty taste.

I'm gonna call it quits on this column for the month. Hopefully some of you will find something to like in one of these records, or more. If you do check them out and dig them, or if I made you waste your money (or bandwidth, as the case may be), let me know, I'm curious to hear what people think. I'll be back next time with some new shit to let you in on. No life till leather…

Don't Try, 120 State Ave NE #136, Olympia, WA 98501 USA
donttry@20buckspin. com, dontfuckingtry.blogspot.com



"Evan likes combos too?" asks Courtney, as PJ furiously tries to hump her elbow. I push him away and he growls.

"Bad dog," I yell at the lint-licking dog, who lately has got into the habit of trying to clean out my belly button from recent surgeries.

"I eat them because I have to study so hard for all these exams," explains Courtney, "it's the only way."

I nod my head.

"You don't think I'm witty," Courtney says to me, and I assure her she is. Just preoccupied with schoolwork. Like Evan. Who is preoccupied with his new buffalo-horn glasses' frames *and* school.

Anyway, the conversation seems to be going nowhere, so I figure I'll tell my girl from LA a story that goes nowhere.

Because sometimes nowhere is nice.

Sometimes nowhere is somewhere.

Somewhere better than the nowhere you could be.

I'd explain more, but PJ won't stop humping Courtney's arm. And I'm getting jealous.

***

"How do *you* eat combos?" Michael the drummer asks Evan the bass player.

Evan is behind the wheel of his grandfather's Jew-Canoe, cruising along at a comfortable eighty miles per hour, with Michael seated next to him. I, of course, am laying on the back seat with my eyes closed. I hardly feel any bumps as I try to push my bandmates' current conversation out of my brain.

"Well," explains Evan, "I eat the outside first, then the cheese. I like to save the best part for last."

"I like to bite off both ends," explains Michael, "then eat the middle part."

"Kind of like a double circumcision," Evan remarks.

Michael agrees, then shows Evan exactly how he eats combos.

I squint, still making believe I'm sleeping, and watch Michael in action. I'm not impressed.

"You should really try sucking off the outside," explains Evan, as he searches for a decent radio station as we make our way upstate New York for the gig, "That way you get the cheese to melt on your tongue."

Michael, following every word Evan says, nods his head in agreement.

"So," says Michael, "You are saying that to get a greater combo experience, one must first take off the skin of the morsel, then enjoy and savior the interior."

It is quite evident that Michael's years of work at the Food Channel as Master Controller have paid off.

"Exactly," says Evan.

They both smile at each other, then eat some more combos they purchased some miles back at a Mobile Station.

I pretend to sleep some more as we

make our way toward Goshen, New York. I actually wish I could sleep, but because of the intelligent conversation in the front seat, and my memories of the past few days, I find myself with tour-insomnia. Something rare for me. I can usually sleep through hailstorms, blown tires, cell-phone break-ups, and even minor accidents. But this was different. I was stressed. So I thought back to what I think started it all. That woman a few days earlier. And her kids.

***

"Are you a good boy?" I asked my puppy, PJ, as we made our way out of my building and onto the morning sidewalk.

PJ just looked at me with his Yorkshire Terrier eyes, with his stubby tail wagging.

"You are a good boy, aren't you?" I said in a high-pitched voice, sounding like a total pussy.

"You are a good boy, aren't you?" some construction worker guy mimicked, as he put headphones on and started up his jackhammer.

"Asshole," I said to him, loudly. PJ growled in agreement. Of course I made sure I said it after he couldn't hear me.

I took PJ around the block to do his business. First it was that long morning piss. That lasts forever. And ever. And ever.

Finally, after submerging the base of our local tree, PJ dashed up the block with me right behind him. He then began to do the "poo-walk," where he puts his nose to the ground, sniffs like crazy, and slowly walks forward, with his hind legs going faster than his front. After a few seconds, he finds himself in the squatting position from which he usually does his business. And this morning was no different. Well, except he went a lot. More than I had the paper towels for. So I had to make two trips to the garbage. Each time with a handful of dogshit. People passing me by gave me the strangest looks as they quickly got out of my way.

Finally, like a good New Yorker, sidewalk cleaned up, I made my way back toward my building.

It was then I encountered that woman and her kids.

As we approached them, the kids noticed PJ but the mother was oblivious. She had a Duane-Reade bag in one hand and the hands of both her small children in the other.

"Oh my God!" screamed the little boy as PJ approached him, sniffing the ground for crumbs to suck up. Like a vacuum cleaner.

Or like a Hoover.

In fact, that's his nickname. Hoover. Because he sucks up *everything* on the street.

The woman looked at what her little boy was screaming about.

PJ.

"Oh my God!" repeated the little girl, standing right next to her brother and mother.

As we approached them, the little boy ran and hid behind his mother, screaming. The little girl did the same.

"Hi," I said, all smiles. I found it a little weird that anyone would be afraid of PJ. After all, he is only six pounds, and the worse thing he'd ever do is lick someone to death.

"Shoo dog, shoo!" said the little boy.

"Shoo, bad dog," said the girl.

"Bad dog?" I said to myself.

"You a bad dog, bad dog!" screamed the little boy, on the verge of tears.

P.J., confused, turned around and looked up at me.

I just shrugged my shoulders.

"Don't be afraid of the doggie," said the woman to her kids, as she held them close, each clasping one of her legs.

"He's a friendly dog," I said, trying to make light of the stupid situation.

"He's a Toto dog," explained the mother, "just like from that movie."

Actually, she was wrong. Toto was some other kind of terrier. PJ is a Yorkie. Whatever. I didn't say anything.

"A Toto dog!" exclaimed the little boy.

"Just like Toto!" yelled the little girl.

Suddenly the kids were happy. Still afraid, but now smiling instead of crying.

P.J. and I walked past the mother and her kids and it was then I heard it.

"But Toto was black," said the little boy to his mother.

"He was black," repeated his sister.

I looked down at my brown, silver, and gold Yorkie.

"You're damn right he was," said the mother, who also happened to be black, as were her kids, "and you should be proud of that!"

"Toto was black!" her two kids yelled, "Yay!"

As I walked back in my building with PJ, I banged my head against the front door. On purpose.

***

"I like cheddar cheese the best," explains Michael, about his favorite kind of combos.

I try and pretend I'm still asleep. I can't believe the same conversation has gone on so long.

"The nacho and the pizza ones all taste like shit" he says. "Cheddar cheese is not corrupted by the foul spices the others are made with."

Evan nods his head in agreement, and then goes on to explain that the pizza ones aren't that bad. Especially the pepperoni ones.

Michael argues with him, yelling about the ingredients having to be just right.

I try and escape in my mind to a better place than Evan's grandfather's car, on its way with Furious George to Goshen, New York. Which happens to be on the border of Florida, New York. Which tells you how *exciting* this show is going to be.

"Look," says Evan, pissed off, "I've eaten combos for years, and consider myself somewhat of an expert."

"Oh, really," says Michael, sarcastically, "Then tell me, oh mighty one, why they all suck except for the cheddar cheese ones?"

I escape with thoughts of PJ again. But this time it's a few days later, and we are entering a friend's building. It was another stressful event.

***

"He's such a cute dog," says this Chelsea muscle man to me as he enters the building, "and you are such a cute guy!"

I thank him for his compliments, and tell the doorman guy who I'm there to see. As I do so, this beautiful woman steps out of a cab and walks toward us.

The first thing I notice about her is her shoes. Black pumps. Ultra high heels. Then I notice the leather pants. Tight. All the way to her waist. They are so tight I can make out the outline of her vagina. It looks nice. Next I see her black leather shirt, and black leather jacket. Hot.

And tight.

I then see her long blonde flowing hair, and beautiful face. I make her for a supermodel right away.

She walks toward the doorman and me, and we both stare at her, stunned.

Finally the doorman speaks.

"May I help you, ma'am?"

The woman takes out a small piece of paper with a name scribbled on it, and an apartment number.

"28-J," she says to the doorman.

The doorman picks up a phone and dials the apartment number. "Who should I say is here?" he asks.

The woman again looks at the small piece of paper in her hand. She reads the name scribbled on it.

"Tiffany", she says.

I immediately make her for a hooker. As does the doorman.

"Hello," says the doorman into the phone, "a Tiffany is here to see you."

While this is happening, the leggy blonde leans over and pets PJ.

"He's so cute," she tells me.

PJ does the puppy dance and she smiles one hell of a beautiful smile.

My dog and I melt.

"Uh-huh," says the doorman, still on the phone, then hangs up.

"Well?" asks Tiffany, slightly annoyed.

The doorman, saying nothing, hands Tiffany an envelope.

Tiffany opens it, and then bitches under her breath.

"I hate when they give me instructions," she mumbles.

She then leaves the doorman and me and makes her way toward a mirror down the hall, where she pulls back her hair. She wipes half the makeup off her face. But she still looks like a million dollars.

PJ and I make our way toward the elevator.

As it arrives, so does the blonde hooker.

"Ya going up too, I see," she says to PJ and me.

I smile at her, and PJ wags his nub.

The three of us enter the large elevator and I push the button for the 34th floor. She pushes the one for the 28th.

"He is so cute," the blonde says to me as PJ jumps all over her legs. Like I wish I could.

I tell her that he's a Yorkie, one year old, and that I love the little guy.

"What's his name?" she asks.

"PJ," I tell her. I don't explain that it stands for "Pussy Junior." She wouldn't understand. Or maybe she would. Whatever.

"I have a PJ too," she says.

I just stare at her.

"Do you want to see my PJ?" she asks me.

I just stare at her.

"Well?" she asks.

"Umm," I stammer, "OK!"

She starts to unzip her jacket and I get excited. She's going to show me it, right here, in the elevator. And for free. How much luckier could I get? I look up and see the elevator camera looking at us. So what. Someone else besides PJ and I are going to get a thrill. I just hope they destroy the tape after they're through with it.

"I love my PJ," says the hooker as she finishes unzipping her jacket and moves her hands on to her torso.

"Umm," is all I can say.

"My PJ is the best. It's so cute. Are you ready?" she asks.

I nod. My tongue is too hard to speak.

The hooker reaches into an interior pocket of her jacket and takes out a Polaroid picture. She then hands it to me.

Without looking at it I think to myself that a picture of a PJ is better than no PJ at all.

I then look at the picture. It's a PJ, all right. About seven pounds, brownish-gray, floppy ears, and a nubby tail. A Yorkie.

"His name is Ted, as in Teddy," she tells me, "he's four years old yesterday, and he's *my* PJ!"

After we arrive at her floor and we say our good-byes, I bang my head against the elevator door. On purpose.

***

"Maybe they should make cream cheese with matzah-cracker-flavored combos," says Evan, as he cruises along.

"If they do it just right," says Michael. "Although, I'd still prefer cheddar cheese. I like cheddar cheese."

I open my eyes and sit up. This conversation between The Combo-King and Rainman had gone on long enough.

"Are we almost there?" I ask Evan, like a kid asks his dad.

"Do you have to piss?" asks Evan, "because if you do, just do it into a Gator-Aid bottle like me. Or any other juice canister. Anything with a wide neck."

"Yeah," says Michael, "a wide neck. You wouldn't want to get it stuck!"

They both laugh at that comment.

I don't.

Taking out my penis in front of other men, especially my band, is not humorous. Or enjoyable.

But to some guys it is.

Like at the Honcho Magazine party I'd been at a couple of days earlier.

The event that put me over the edge.

***

My lawyer Andy and I arrived at 40 East 4th Street around eleven. 40 East 4th Street is actually The Bowery Bar. If I'd known that, I probably would have stayed home. Actually, I probably would have stayed home if it hadn't been for Andy.

"Come on, George, babe," Andy said, "It's a Honcho Party! It'll be fun! Naked men! Lots of booze!"

"Andy, babe," I told him, "the booze sounds great, but the naked men? We're not gay."

"So what?" he said, "it'll be a swinging time! We'll have fun!"

I knew he was right, but I pretended to be not interested. I mean, I couldn't act excited about going to a party where I'd see lots of Oscar Meyer Wieners. It wouldn't be, well, punk rock.

But as it turns out, it was. After pushing our way through the front of the Bowery Bar, which looks the same whether it's a porno magazine party or a Presidential party, we found the back area.

With all Honcho posters on the walls.

And naked men.

Lots of them.

Walking around in the crowd, with their wangs hanging out, flapping in the breeze.

And what gets me is that no one looked at them twice. It was just like, "Well, here I am, with my dick hanging out, and isn't it a lovely day for a party?"

There were big dicks. And small dicks. Fat dicks and skinny dicks. Even dicks that were uncircumcised. Ewwwww.

So, after getting an eyeful of dicks, Andy and I made our way to the bar to have a much-needed drink.

"What do ya want?" Andy asked me.

"Nothing expensive," I told him.

"Everything is expensive here," he told me, "it's The Bowery Bar!"

I told him I'd have what he was having. It ended up being Dewars. On the rocks. I told Andy we should have cigars with us, to go with that drink.

He told me there were plenty of cigars, to just look around.

While Andy pushed his way through the crowded bar, I backed up a few paces and waited.

And waited.

The crowd at the bar was packed very tightly and it took forever to get a drink.

While I waited for Andy, I looked around me. Besides lots of gay men, there were also many beautiful women there. I mean, beautiful. Tall, short, brunette, blonde. They were as different as the penises that surrounded us. But all hot.

As I waited, looking at all the hot chicks and trying to act straight, however you do that, I noticed Andy at the bar. He was almost at the counter. Soon I would have a drink.

"Hi," said some neat-looking chick, as she walked by me.

"Hi," I said back, in my most baritone voice.

She looked at me funny.

Then some blonde approached me.

"Do you know where the louve is?" she asked, with a heavy British accent.

Instead of saying anything, I pointed her in the right direction. I figured anything I

could say would sound gay.

"Thanks, sweetie," she said to me. "My friend Matthew would love you! You are adorable!"

I wanted to explain to her that she was hot, that I liked vaginas and breasts, and really wasn't into wieners, but it was no use. The music was blaring too loud, and, besides, I *was* at a Honcho party.

"I'm sure he's a fab guy," I wound up saying.

When in Rome, or Greece....

Finally Andy got to the bar to get us a drink. I sighed a breath of relief, and backed up a few paces until I was up against an empty stone pedestal. Or what I thought was empty. Or at least, that had been a few moments earlier.

As the music blared, I saw Andy waving at me, telling me to move forward. I just ignored him and waited for the Dewars.

He started to wave more violently and began to yell something. I couldn't hear him because of the loud music, so I just made a sign with my hands like, "get the fucking drink, Andy!"

So he did. And it was then I felt the slight pounding at the back of my head. Not in my head, like a headache, but on my head. Literally. I must have been imagining it.

As the beat to the music pulsed, so did the pounding on the back of my head. "That's strange," I thought to myself. As it continued, I thought that maybe it wasn't my imagination. Finally, I put my hand back there and felt something.

Fleshy.

I turned around and saw a set of testicles closer to my face than I'd ever see before. And attached to those was a huge penis. And attached to that, a naked hairy man. On a pedestal.

I rushed away toward Andy. He handed me my Dewars, and then said, "As your lawyer, I advise you to stay away from that naked man's private parts."

He must have seen that guy tea-bagging me. His balls slappng the back of my head. I was so embarrassed that I had to drink five more Dewars.

The night ended with Andy and I leaving The Bowery Bar after looking up several men's asses perched on pedestals.

I banged my head into the club's door as we left. On purpose.

***

"Cheddar cheese is still the best flavor," said Michael, from the front seat of the car. "You can come up with flavors like cream cheese and matzah, and enjoy the taste of pizza and nacho all you want, but cheddar cheese is the shit!"

"Pizza," exclaimed Evan, "or nacho. Much better than cheddar cheese. What do you think, George?"

From the back seat I answered them. I banged both of their heads against the car doors. On purpose.

***

"There is a third way to eat combos," explains Courtney after I tell her this story, "But you have to be good with your tongue. Flexible, you know?

I just look at her with that "what the fuck?" look.

She looks back at me with the "you know what I'm talking about" look, then explains that you use your teeth to split the combo in half, lengthwise, then scoop out the cheese with your tongue. Like what'd you'd do with a vagina. Except vaginas, she explains, shouldn't have cheese in them.

I bang her head into the wall as well.

Take my Life, Please.

Endnotes:

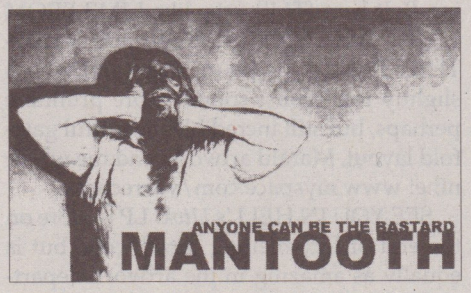
www.myspace.com/helpgeorgetabb

Potato Famine from Oregon rocks my world. I can't wait for their full-length album to come out. You might even hear me on it! Yay!

My pal Val helped put on benefits for the family of Brian Deneke, a punk kid killed due to ignorance. Val rules. As do all the bands over THE WHOLE COUNTRY that helped out...as did promoters and clubs. Bless you all.

Carbon 14 is a kick-ass zine. Totally.

Ramones007 is my xbox live name. Find me and I'll kick your ass in Modern Warfare or Halo 3. Actually, you'll kick mine, but I like to talk a big game! Punk Rock!



FUCKING ASSHOLES DON'T GET IT

How to tell if you or someone you know is a piece of shit

The Acoustic Guitar Test: Say you're at a party. Everyone's having a good time. You may or may not have had a few beers in you (although this is not a requirement for the test, simply an extenuation of the "good time" aspect). But you begin to get a little paranoid. "How do I know that these people aren't really assholes? Aren't really *out to get me?"* you ask yourself. These questions scratch at your brain so incessantly that you swear you'll break a bottle over some potential choad's face, jump out the window, or both.

But it doesn't have to come to that. The acoustic guitar is one of the best signs that you are in the midst of at least one extreme dickhead. If you can find a guitar in the house, place it in the middle of that crowded room. The first person to walk over to it and start strumming along is most likely the biggest douchebag at the party. And if people start cheering him on, feel free to lose your fucking mind and brutalize as many people while exiting through the living-room window.

There are few things in this world that make me more nauseous than the sound of the acoustic guitar. It conjures deep repressed memories in my psyche, memories that are far too banal for me to face. Regardless, the acoustic guitar seems to be one of the main instruments for bringing most people's inner asshole to the foreground. I can only imagine their thought processes.

"Oh, woah, a fuckin' acoustic guitar! Holy shit! I'm fuckin' Neil Young! I'm motherfuckin' Willie Nelson! Fuck yeah! I'm never going to put this fuckin' thing down every again! The wood fibers have fused with my palm! Me and this guitar are together *forever*!"

Oh yes, and I've heard the "electric guitars are, like, destroying the environment and exploiting people. Only with the acoustic guitar can we truly express ourselves outside of *the system*." Noble sentiments for sure, but I'm willing to bet your persistence on strumming away at that thing is linked more with OCD and a wet-dream involving you and Woody Guthrie. Sorry—for all your crooned rhetoric and generalizations and sentimentality, you do not resemble Woody Guthrie in any way. You always sound like that sweaty goon at church singing *Kumbaya* trying to lure the young to Jesus like the Pied Piper.

The "I'm a Noise Artist" Test: This time you're on a crowded bus and someone sitting across from you notices the pins on your jacket. This person will always point at them and say, "cool band." Never will they actually say what band is on your pin. Beware, these people are like fucking born-

again Christians and will use any means to start up a conversation with you. Before you can even say "uh, thanks" or ignore them, they will quickly segue into how they're in a band, but not really. "It's more, like, ambient noise stuff."

At this point you know you've been ensnared by an asshole. They will talk at you about how fuckin' sick their ring modulation is, how they circuit bended some bullshit they pulled out of a dumpster, and how you should check out their MySpace. Somewhere in there they will talk about how they "used to be into that punk stuff, but it got old blah blah No Fun Fest blah blah Whitehouse blah blah blah Bastard who?"

Simply put—these Newjack Noise kids are no different than Christians or Army Recruiters who want to indoctrinate you into their cult of bullshit.

The Ron Paul Test: Motherfuck every dickhead who supports this jiggling sack of black, oily diarrhea.

Endnotes:
1) More to come next month. In the meantime, gregory.mantooth@gmail.com

Well, the Bay Area is in the midst of one of the more torrential downpours since, well, since last winter. I've been out of town, so I apologize for my lack of organization this month. I do have some cool stuff to talk about this time, though, musick-wise!

Malaysian old-timers PARKINSON and RECONSTRUCT have a new split CD out which is some awesome early '90s style crust/grind a la the British classics ENT and DOOM, and many more. These guys are no pretenders—they've been around since those glory days! Broken_noise @yahoo.com

Also from Southeast Asia is a three-way split CD by the Filipino bands HALF THE BATTLE, PLAY, and FEUD. FEUD, of course, I had heard of from their CD, but these other guys were new to me. All play generally pretty thrashy retro USHC with a big time sXe bend, reminding me of CHAIN OF STRENGTH. I'm not a big fan of the style, but this is a cool release. Delusion.of.terror@gmail.com.

Mexico has been churning out the awesome crust/grind acts as of late, and it's hard to keep up with all the CDs! NO MAS NO's *Aquel que tanto odias* CD is one of the latest I have gotten, although I may not be getting them right when they come out. Awesome male/female screamin' HC that mixes the crust and the grind! NMNrecords@hotmail.com.

MERDA is one of the better bands from Brazil of the power-violence/thrash variety, and they have a new CD out called *Minha Linda Colecao do EPS do Conjunto de Musica Rock*. My Portuguese isn't what it once was, but I get the idea—it's a collection of EPS! I remember these guys fondly from their HELLNATION split 7". Blastin good stuff! 22 tracks! www.laja.com.br.

NOT BROKEN IN SPIRIT has a new self-titled CD out. These Bulgarians play some SOIA meets WARZONE styled sXe HC, which as I noted again, isn't really my thing. Balkans do seem to be getting into this stuff though! www.unitedand strong.net.

Italian legends WRETCHED have a CD out called *Vivi ogni momento* that contains the *La Tua Morte* LP, *Il Controluce* 7", tracks from their last show live, and some videos for those digitally inclined. This is, from what I can remember, definitely not a complete discography, but it's not poorly done. We still need a definitely discography from these guys. www.eu91serbianleague.com.

ESQUIZOFRENIA's is a HC punk band from Bogotá, Colombia that plays some pretty good, atmospheric 'core. Good lyrics relating to animal rights and other topics. Esquizofrenia@hotmail.com.

The new AFTER THE BOMBS *Relentless Onslaught* LP is goddamned amazing. This year has been filled with some mindblowing Bolt-beat (TM!) acts, like LIMB FROM LIMB, EVIL, STORMCROW, and SANCTUM. These guys are up there, but with a slightly less robust sound, more primitive perhaps, but still incredible! Beautiful gatefold layout, Marald artwork, and the whole nine! www.myspace.com/vexrecords.

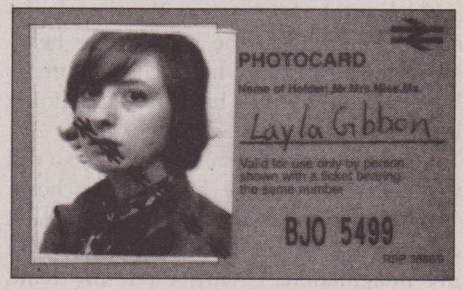
SEE YOU IN HELL's *Utok!* LP is more on the end of face-melting thrash-core, but is equally as amazing in the artwork department (B-52s dropping guitar bombs? Yes.) These Czech guys promise me they'll come to the US in 2010. Hold them to it!! www.insanesociety.net.

I have a shit ton of more stuff to talk about, but unfortunately I am not fucking organized right now and it will have to wait till next month. I love music, and having a lot of tapes, CDs, and vinyl to peruse overall is quite enjoyable. My office (yeah I have one, big whoop, wanna fight about it?) is a disaster area. In my old age I have found myself becoming increasingly anal about how organized my belongings are. This contrasts severely with how careless I had been in the past about it. I now get excited at the idea of organizing my zine, distro, record label, and review shit in color-coordinated plastic bins.

Other than that, the nearly month-long "dry spell" of shows here in the Bay Area seems to be coming to a end with plenty of great ones coming up. Of course I say that in jest, as it's absurd the number of great shows there are here, although some of the foreign acts and bigger bands seem to avoid December and January to come out here. I'm still bummed ANFO didn't make it!

Keep it comin', guys!

Nick Daniels, PO Box 18884, Oakland, CA 94619



Disneyland it's my favorite place / Black Flag tapes / Closed-down record stores.

I spent this weekend in Orange County, victim of a failed family reunion; the only silver lining was the fact I was going to go record shopping. But the record store at which I got Dicks *Kill From The Heart*, Fire Engines *Lubricate your Living Room*, Archie Shepp *Fire Music*, etc., etc., etc. is now a mortgage company. The best thrift store is now a (specially made for gated communities) furniture store.

The Goodwill was just full of '90s Target clothing and old video rentals. It made me wonder about how I managed to live in Anaheim for close to two years and managed only to lose it a little, obviously thanks to a combination of the above factors. Thrift stores and record shops and being given a Disneyland annual pass for Christmas one time, getting there by bus, after a day of working at Revelation selling shitty post-emo sXe to indifferent record store clerks. Walking round listening to *The First Four Years* on my walkman watch-

ing families live their dreams while I lived in total isolation. Something about riding the Snow White ride with "Fix Me" as the soundtrack.

Other historic faux teenage times; hanging out at a shitty all-night diner with Golnar talking about our His Hero is Gone experiences. (Seeing them play once, mind totally blown, then making my best friend hitchhike with me for the rest of their UK tour—bear in mind our favorite bands were The Frumpies and Huggy Bear at that point...) Both of us (Golnar and I that is) had to bike frantically to our respective homes so we could listen to *Monuments to Thieves*, which unlike most '90s hardcore records still totally holds up. So fucking good! The whole evening made me think about how when you are a teenager you're so trapped by circumstance, and about how much fun you have anyway. Now I wouldn't ever hitchhike to follow some hardcore band; maybe living in America has made me pretty complacent—I guess getting older does that too.

I still have experiences with music where I am transported in that way by shows and records, totally consumed and transformed, but true independence from parental control does something to the way you see the world. I like teenage style activity, hanging out for hours directionless in some random diner. I hate how everyone just does the directionless hangout in bars when they get old. Well, I guess it isn't that directionless, because people just wanna get laid/fucked up, etc. I just like goofy good times, things that aren't weighed down by what you are going to get out of a situation. Bars spell doom to me somehow, and it makes me sad that that is all people want to do. Sitting and rotting.

Me and Helen (aforementioned best friend) used to walk around Brighton listening to the Rites of Spring LP simultaneously on our walkmans. We would go see *anyone* who came through town, we were so bored—from Palatka to Carol to The Locust. Anyone. Now we both live across the ocean in separate American towns. She is together and teaches/works at Harvard and Boston U and is astronautical, and I work at a bookstore and do shitwork at *MRR*. Brighton was so dreamy and boring, the greenness of the hills and how you can walk out of town to the downs and be in typische English countryside, or get windblown at the piers and the sea. The way the sea gulls are lit up by the lights of the palace and look like flying bird-shaped torches, how they congregate so creepily around the West Pier and it looks like some '50s British noir film, just swarms of them in one big unit of bird swooping.

I don't need a diary to know there's nothing to do.

It's been hard times around these parts recently—everyone I know seems to be freaking out, breaking up, fucking up or just existing in a weird paranoid doomy haze. I am sure it's linked to the NorCal winter crushing spirits and freezing humans in the style of the Amebix krust-classic "WINTERRRRRRRR." The sense of impending doom that's affecting actions and behavior and ideas and plans would seem to indicate a future of total collapse and dismay. I am being purposefully vague. In the face of fear and negativity it's hard to actually make things happen and not just allow things to happen that are going to anyway when you can't shake this feeling of total horror. I know I have felt the past few months have been spent just getting by—waking up on time and getting to work late anyway among pointless acts. Going home, and that's about it. I hate it but am unable to make things different somehow, trapped by routine and boredom. The internet is the new evening lost to bad television and lost possibilities...

I had this stupid conversation with a boy I was crazy about a while back about how he doesn't like mosh parts. Apparently the whole song should be a mosh part, not just five seconds of a song surrounded by filler non-mosh parts. For some reason that idea made me really sad, and connected a million melancholic thought dots, like—is growing old just accepting your pathetic lot in life? Settling for five-second mosh parts and lots of filler? When you are younger things are hurtling so fast but it actually feels like dragged feet, slowwwwwww, and your enthusiasms consume you and it's hard to imagine ever existing in a world where all people wanna do is get wasted and be comfortable and coy rather than have random adventures and make music and go on random bike rides.

Usually I am content just walking around epic-style, over Twin Peaks and out to the ocean, headphones on, total disconnection from the world in this weather. I don't understand people that can't be by themselves without wanting to end it all, but then at the same time right now I feel like a ten-year-old on a rainy day stuck in a self-constructed prison of boredom and drudgery when by myself. So... Contradictory girl. I am constantly getting unnecessarily nervous about people moving to different parts of the world and abandoning San Francisco, which as my friend Charity puts it can feel like a pile of shit disguised as a wedding cake sometimes. Beautiful on top but totally rotten throughout. Dreamy and boring. But I think everywhere is kind of like that sometimes... When you move to a city expecting to leave behind the things that made you so miserable in another city, the one you abandoned, it turns out it's not possible, because it wasn't the city—it was you that created the shittiness.

Somehow we have to learn how to relax into ourselves...like not always running away from anything that could spring a trap or could provide refuge. Right now it's easy to feel like California has been reduced to one cliché—the end of the world. There's nothing to go towards, just flotsam and jetsam, slums and gated communities, credit cards and craft projects, mountains and graveyards. I would feel doomed, but I feel like that's not even an option in this state. Have a nice day, though.

"Have You Got 10p?"
See you down the social getting your dole
You're a real scrounger, you're a real arsehole
See you in the city down the Marquee
Going up to people, now you're coming up to me

"Have you got 10p?"
"Have you got 10p?"
"Have you got 10p?"
"No, not me!"

Blond spiky hair, bondage strides
You got no class.
You ain't got no pride.
See you in the city standing with a mate.
10p a person. It's the going rate.

Good things about the internet include the fact that you can ask for someone to upload MP3s of the Mecht Mensch/Tar Babies split tape and they will just do it. I like that I am able to walk to work listening to "Die in the Classroom;" Mecht Mensch adequately preparing me for confronting endless yuppie oblivion. Obviously easy access raises the eternal question of the new kids "earning" the right to listen to the Betong Hysteria 7" since they didn't find it in a gluebag in the alleyway behind Martin Sorrondeguy's apartment but instead on some nerd's MP3 blog.

I remember one of the first times I met Martin, whilst following Los Crudos around the hottest part of America during the hottest part of the summer and feeling totally alienated after an epic all-night mostly dude-based conversation about Finnish hardcore. I think I was 18, and I had no idea what anyone was talking about and was just bored and thus retained none of the information imparted. If that same conversation happened now I would just go to some website, maybe Kill From the Heart, investigate some of the bands mentioned, and discover at age 18 that Finnish hardcore rules rather than finding it out at age 28 or whatever via doing the *MRR* radio show. Though I guess if I had not been too uncomfortable and irritated as a teenage to care, I would have taken the info in and used it to obtain 7"s, which probably cost a lot less then than they do now. MP3 blogs make life as an obsessive circa-'81 hardcore fan a lot easier than having to hang out in gross dudes' rooms while they make tapes for your dumb ass.

The Silla Electrica Demo—you need to figure out how to get this! It's like the perfect combination of ye olde Danish and Spanish punk, like a crazy mix of, um, Lost Kids and Vulpess? It's totally wild sounding and frantic with the most insane and great girl vocals since Mai of Gorilla Angreb blew out your heart. I think they are based in Madrid and hopefully someone will put out a record soon because they were born for the 7" format for sure. It's actually exciting to listen to, you know? There haven't been that many new bands recently that have been worth caring about, let alone worth losing your shit over—this is some seriously fierce and classic-sounding Spanish punk.

Golnar's Permanent Birthday Section. When Gnars lived here we used to joke that it was always almost her birthday, because she talked about it so much. "I'm going to have Crim Dam/Limp Wrist play SF on my birthday," etc., etc., and well, it never actually happened, and still Criminal Damage has failed to play the Bay Area in an unprecedented display of lameness. But Limp Wrist are playing here in February, which I believe is Golnar's birthday month (who knows, though? Like I said, could be anytime! Maybe it's actually her birthday every day?) as are Pierced Arrows (the new Fred and Toody band), and Gnars is going to be here for both of these events. I guess she had to leave SF in order to raise the possibility of her mass birthday punk fest actually happening. Maybe Crim Dam will play too? Also in Gnars-related news, WTF is up with her not writing a column anymore? Too busy hanging out at Lower East Side hot spots with the hipsters to write about how life changing Alien Kulture and the Petticoats are? It seems like whenever people move to NYC punk starts being a collection of ephemera and humorous past life anecdotes rather than experienced culture. Happens to the best of us. My only request: please don't start thinkin' yr still punk because of your collection of old *Ripper* zines and having PBR sponsor your ironic art openings.

Last week I went to see *Juno* with my aunt, who generally likes family movies featuring Whoopi Goldberg and Ashley Judd, in a mall cinema full of Orange County teenagers. I am sure you have heard about this movie—it has been promoted exhaustively as a female counterpart to the current wave of awkward teenage boy comedies like *Superbad*, which made me curious to see it. I like jokes! And teen movies!

Watching *Juno*, however, was like watching a three-hour-long episode of *The Gilmour Girls*. So many pop cultural references crammed into every surface, every conversation, it was almost too exhausting to absorb or care about any of it. The dialog was contrived and phony, like a weird combination of *Dawson's Creek*, old *Sassy* magazines, and an after-school special from a post-*Simpsons* world. What was really depressing, however, was the basic plot—the lead protagonist, Juno, gets pregnant at 16, and is unable to have an abortion after being told outside of the abortion clinic that her fetus already has fingernails by a cartoony stereotyped cypher of an Asian teen pro-life classmate. The abortion clinic itself is full of self-absorbed goth chicks and sweaty unpleasant-looking people, and it seemed like straight up pro-life propaganda aimed at girls who shop at Hot Topic and like the Ramones. Her pregnancy is bathed in this cute indie rock craft-fair glaze, with Kimya Dawson's cutesy infantile vocals endlessly cooing in the background. She gives up the child for adoption of course, because that's always super-easy to do, and the movie ends with her and her boyfriend singing the same horrible Kimya Dawson song that has been playing endlessly throughout the movie to each other in a particularly effective act of aural terrorism.

Obviously being a feminist is about making choices on your own terms, but for most 16-year-old girls, having a child is a difficult non-indie-rock-soundtracked situation and it was frustrating to see a movie that basically made being a pregnant teenage girl seem like a twee adventure. *Juno* made me think of the creepy way that 50th-wave hipster feminists have taken on and "radicalized," or rather, made chic the so-called domestic arts (i.e., the craft revolution—see my first ever column for a rant on that), defending patriarchal constructions of femininity and traditional roles as valid choices for women.

The whole movie felt so underhanded and lame the more I thought about it—the ultimate theft of underground culture for nefarious purposes. I did not identify with the lead character at all—she seemed like the construction of a lonely thirty-year-old man trying to spew out as many "now" pop-cultural references as possible. Though, as my aunt kept telling me, it was actually written by a 30-year-old SEX WORKER LADY, which I guess is what they're promoting to keep the movie edgy or something so people don't notice it's plastic veneer.

Juno seemed like it was written in the early-'90s, in the post-grunge slacker boom, really dated with the same air as something like *Reality Bites*. Another failed attempt at a subcultural moment that ends up making the characters not seem like actual people but representations of the writer's fantasy of youth and rebellion. The fact that this was vaguely marketed as the female answer to the Judd Apatow movies and yet it wasn't even funny was also a bummer. It seemed more like the teenage *Garden State*, so consumed with its own "quirkiness" and so fey it was kind of unbearable. Also, how lame: the dudes in *Superbad* were on a quest to lose their virginity, whereas Juno instantly gets pregnant as soon as she loses hers. No epic quest for her! Long-ass digression to note that I just got back from seeing *Persepolis*, a movie based on a graphic novel about a Iranian girl coming of age during the revolution, which was so much radder than fuckin *Juno*. Marjane, the main character in Persepolis, actually seemed like a real girl rather than a drawing of one, even though she was in fact a drawing! So much more real and relatable than Juno even though her life experiences were so much more distant from mine.

http://www.mindspring.com/~acheslow/AuntMary/bang/hose_intro.html.

Sharon Cheslow has a rad website that not only lists every woman musican/girl band in punk between 1976 and 1984 but also compiles her fanzines. The article linked above is pretty amazing; if anyone has a tape of this band they would make for me I would be the most psyched! 50 Foot Hose.

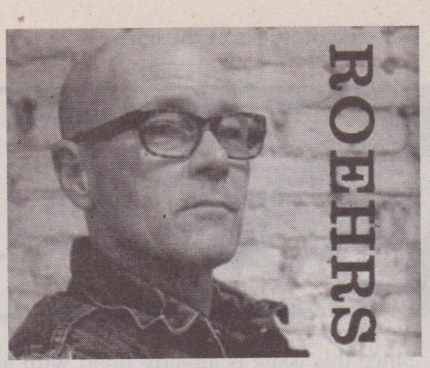
Every boy wearing a flannel shirt and beat-up vans is now officially "that dude" in a modern-day take on "that girl," only for the mass uniformity of this style—maybe it's mostly an SF thing? Christy said it is, but I think it's probably infested the streets of Philadelphia, Portland, etc., etc., everywhere where ironic mustaches and Circle Jerks vans can be had! That Dude is infectious and is taking over the world, and it must be said the SF version knows all of the words to Jump Off a Building songs, watching the all-plaid pile-ups at a recent Thrillhouse show. I felt a little like a creepy old lady, which is a feeling that comes to me when I am at a show that I don't feel "part of."

I will never be That Dude and I do not want to be; I don't want to be the female equivalent either, whatever that is. Maybe it's one of those craft revolution girls? Who rides a zillion-dollar Italian track bike? And has an owl pendant? I am actually not sure. There were girls in the pit who also knew all the words, with fucked-up punk-girl bleached hair who were obvies not craft revolution droids. It's their music. Right now I feel like "my music" is Sex Vid-style, fucked up weirdo doom. I told the check-out girl I talk to at the fancy grocery store (who is into Mika Miko and kind of looks like Rachel from Comet Gain) where I buy one apple a day that Jump Off a Building were like the dude version of Mika Miko which I kind of think is true. I know Mika Miko thinks of them as a brother band, and though they are in no way close to as life-changing/rad, I think it's hard for an all-dude band to do that style/sound without just seeming like another link in the endless chain that has been and always will be. Whereas when girls do it, and do it *right*, it's kind of mind-blowing.

The Nurse 7"

Agnostic Front-*Fascist Attitudes*

layla.gibbon@gmail.com
whatwewantsisfree.blogspot.com for old columns.



Avalanche of Bricks

Fuck! SACRED SHOCK from Austin, Texas has put out an explosive slab of punk bile and bother! The seven-inch EP on Shogun Records finally captures the nastiness of these individuals of on vinyl. The six SACRED SHOCK songs: "Deadlines," "Pedestal," "Planet Decay," "Bridgeburner," "Best Interest," and "Sacred Shock" appeared only as a limited cassette tape release prior to this vinyl issue. Fuck! Listen to the venom spewing from Alex on the vocals on the song "Planet Decay." Yes! You get Hans on guitar, Logan on Bass, and Matt on drums. You may recognize some of these miscreants from other punk bands such as ARMY OF JESUS. On side B the SACRED SHOCK EP pulverizes you with a one-two combination of "Best Interest" right into the band's menacing punk anthem "Sacred Shock." You get beat up again and again while the guitar and bass slash and burn furrows in your brain! The mean-spirited intensity builds and builds and you are reduced to a helpless pulp! This fucking record kicks ass! For your copy of the SACRED SHOCK EP contact shogun-burnout@wanadoo.fr.

Yes Sir! Mr. Yannick and his esteemed Feral Ward Records have blessed you with another blast of bristling punk damage! REPERCUSSIONS new EP *No Peace* will fuck your mundane little world up! This efficient little eight-shot punk weapon will leave you bleeding profusely! As soon as the needle touches down on the first track "Savage Mutilation" you know you are thoroughly screwed! REPERCUSSIONS attack repeatedly with "Alone," "Razor," "A Light," "Cavity," "Bleed Believe," the title cut "No Peace," and "Beckoning Wind." All eight tunes are fraught with vicious stabbing motions! You will be shown no mercy! Get this manic punk slice immediately! The music is delightfully unhinged and raw! The handsome sleeve with its handsome artwork and thick paper stock is enough to make a record geek weep uncontrollably! Order now from www.feralward.com!

Fuck yes! Northern California's crazed punk band NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE has a storming new EP out on Wayback/Even Worse Records. The *Mindless Violence* EP churns and decimates with six loud, thrashy numbers including: "Just Another Rape," the title track "Mindless Violence," "Smalltown Drama," "No Trust," "Domestic Dispute," and "Paranoid." Fuck-all brutal carnage! NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE has been establishing a strong fan base in this part of the United States with their chaotic, destructo-punk live shows. Keep your ear to the ground for more NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE! For a copy of the raging *Mindless Violence* EP contact Wayback When Records at: waybackwhen-records.com, or Even Worse Records at geocities.com/evenworserecords

Yes! The Bay Area has had some great punk rock and skinhead shows lately! Sammy Winston brought his new band GRACE ALLEY to the Hemlock Tavern in San Francisco recently and tore the fucking roof off! GRACE ALLEY opened for two other Bay Area punk stalwarts SKIN LIKE IRON and NEVER HEALED. Mr. Winston, who played in ALL BETS OFF, started singing for GRACE ALLEY about three months ago. The guitarists, bass player and drummer have been playing as GRACE ALLEY for a year or so and it shows! The band was tight-as-fuck from the first note! The manic guitar playing was absolutely inspired! The bass and drum sounds thundered across the Hemlock floor, cracking the foundations! When Sammy sang, the terrible demons came forth! This man was completely buried in the music! The crowd was mesmerized by Sammy's wild singing style. The danger in the air was palpable! GRACE ALLEY stormed through "Flat Back," "No Grace For The Faithful," "Ghost Town," "Avalanche Of Bricks," "Seven Seas" and a great cover of FEAR's "I Don't Care About You, Fuck You." Fucking great! Sammy managed to rise above the pain of a recent back injury to deliver a set of some of the most ferocious hardcore witnessed in the Bay Area in quite some time! After GRACE ALLEY played, SKIN LIKE IRON carried the hardcore banner proudly. Look for a split seven inch with GRACE ALLEY and SKIN LIKE IRON on Spiderghost Records in the near future. (contact www.spiderghost.net). Headliners NEVER HEALED continued to pummel the punks and skins at the Hemlock. It was a great musical evening for all! If you missed out, make sure to track down the killer NEVER

HEALED/VIOLENT MINDS split seven inch on Spiderghost Records on incredible tri-colored vinyl brought to you by Pirates Press (www.piratespress.com).

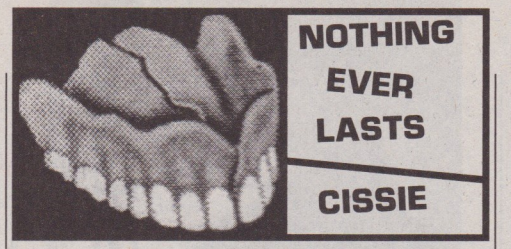
One recent show that caused many problems (read: Good Fun!) was the NEEDLES, ACEPHALIX, DOPE CHARGE and BASTARD SONS OF THE APOCALYPSE show at Benders Bar. Dan and his cronies kicked off the festivities with the sophisticated dark metal tuneage of ACEPHALIX! These fucks melted eardrums for a fifty-mile radius! Dan sang like a man possessed by Satan for the entire set! Fucking brilliant! Next the BASTARD SONS OF THE APOCOLYPSE took charge of the stage—the earth stood still, the moon was blacked out, and the tides withdrew—fucking stunning! These Texas natives scorched the fucking planet! NEEDLES satisfied the melodic punkers in the audience. This led up to the scintillating grand finale! DOPE CHARGE fucked Benders up! Grant, Mackey and company ripped through "Possession," "No Complaint," "Reaper," "Relax," and "At The Rate We're Going." Fucking brute-force punk! You may have spotted some of these cretins playing in bands like DESOLATION (Grant) or CROPNOX and PELIGRO SOCIAL (Mackey). Fucking great!

The Bay Area's favorite skinheads, NUTS AND BOLTS threw a great bash for their CD release party in Oakland at The Stork Club. The crowd was treated to a brilliant display of no-hold-barred hardcore from MASSACRE TIME. Mikey from the US ROUGHNECKS sings in this great new outfit! Eddie Machete from POWERHOUSE gives the band some of its massive strength! The music was explosive and Mike laced the hard-edged skinhead-rock with urgent vocals that cut like a knife. MASSACRE TIME ripped through "It's Alive," "Chainsaw," "Carved In Stone," "Torture Box," "Burial Ground," "Blues Jam," "Stay Hated," "Butcher Knife," "Herb Quest," "Fence Walker" and a respectful "Never Forget" for Mr. Ernie Cortez of O.B.H.C. That was a great set! The SORE THUMBS played next and as always, delivered a top quality set of melodic punk songs with hooks! NUTS AND BOLTS celebrated the release of their triumphant "We Don't Wanna Wake Up" CD with a set that had the crowd up and running! Great! Order your new NUTS AND BOLTS CD from www.funeral-records.net.

Until next month –SEE YOU AROUND....

I'LL BE SEEING YOU.

I'll see you fucks at the bar!



Since this issue is already filled with an overload of nostalgia from this past year, I'm going to use this month's column to look forward into the future. Did ya know that a lot of great international hardcore bands are making their way to our shores this year? There seems to be an abundance of great bands (international and domestic) planning tours of either or both coasts for this upcoming spring/summer. If you've been in hibernation for the past several months like I have, then you might want to take a break from being a shut-in to catch some of these bands. If you've already got a busy schedule, be sure to pencil some of these shows in.

First off, I have to mention that Systematic Death, one of the best early hardcore bands from Japan, has reunited and planned short tours of the US and Europe. In the US they are playing shows with Tragedy on May 2nd through 5th. They are only playing in Portland, NYC, and Providence. Unfortunately, I don't think I will be able to scrape up the funds to make it to any of these events but if they have retained the energy of their recordings then they are definitely a band worth flying or driving hundreds of miles to see. Also from Japan, Blowback is touring from May 23rd until June 7th with Severed Head of State. West Coast only, I believe. If you search around on the interweb, you will probably find the itinerary. I'll be attending their Bay Area gigs.

Limp Wrist is recording in Portland in February and they will also be gracing the Bay Area with a couple gigs. They are playing at the Eagle and Balazo Gallery. Honestly these shows will have already happened by the time this issue circulates but I am looking forward to seeing E-Coli for the first time and I can't wait to witness Warkrime in the environment of the Eagle (local leather bar). I wonder if Brace will hide his leather gloves like he did at the Folsom Street Fair. The Limp Wrist show at Balazo is rumored be the last Jump Off a Building show, which is a bummer because the one time I saw them, they were frantic and great. Limp Wrist's Portland show looks like a blast too. They are playing with Lebenden Toten, PRF, and Social Graces. I've heard nothing but good things about Social Graces and I would like to finally see Lebenden Toten and PRF, but I doubt I'll be able to make it up there. The same week as these Limp Wrist shows, Pierced Arrows is playing at the Great American Music Hall and Carnal Knowledge, a new band from NYC featuring a member of Hey Girl!, is playing at Thrillhouse.

From March 6th through 17th, the West Coast will get treated to the raw hardcore stylings of Mälmo, Sweden's Fy Fan. Fy Fan is playing at Thrillhouse in San Francisco with Needles, Acts of Sedition, and Violent Minds. They are also playing at Gilman with Warkrime, Annihilation Time, Socialcide, and more. If you haven't heard 'em yet, Fy Fan plays some seriously pissed sounding hardcore, which I'd place somewhere in between Totalitär and Amdi Petersen's Arme. Their 7" is deserving of all the praise it received in the year-end top ten section.

Austin's Sacred Shock is currently planning a Southwest/West Coast tour to coincide with the release of their new 7" on Schizophrenic. They have set aside the dates of April 16th until May 1st. I heard a rough mix of their new recordings and they've totally outdone themselves. The new songs have some serious momentum and hooks. I'd highly suggest supporting these Texan freaks while they're on tour. I'm sure you can check their MySpace page to see what they've got planned.

May 15th, 16th, and 17th brings us the fourth installment of Chaos in Tejas. I've attended all of the previous three and it usually ends up being some of the most fun days of the year. So far Timmy has lined up Hard Skin, Fy Fan, Invasion (Barcelona), Straightjacket Nation (Australia), Marked Men, Brain Handle, Midnight (Clevo), Hatred Surge, Iron Lung, and Under Pressure. He plans to confirm quite a few more. I seriously hope that he instigates a boat show too, 'cos that shit was so much fun last year. Plus being in Austin offers the opportunity to eat 80-cent tacos at Tamale House, tamales at Curra's, and two-for-one veggie burgers at Hut's.

Both Invasion and Straightjacket Nation have planned tours around Chaos In Tejas. Invasion will only be traversing the East Coast (May 7th-16th) aside from the fest—some of those shows will be with Hard Skin. I've been told that Invasion is one of the most intense live bands in Europe right now. They have a sound that is reminiscent of Japanese proto-hardcore with some

Italian influences. Their LP on La Vida Es En Mus probably would've made my year-end top ten if I hadn't neglected it as a result of being homeless for three months. Straightjacket Nation should be hitting the West Coast in June. These Aussies play demented, riot-inducing hardcore with lyrics about cults, terrorists, and other sordid topics. They have two great 7"s and an oddly paired split 7" with Eddy Current Suppression Ring. As an aside, Straightjacket Nation's vocalist, D X, is also the man behind *Distort* fanzine, and he is the newest addition to the *Maximum Rocknroll* columns section. Look out for his first column next month. At any rate, I am looking forward to seeing all of these bands and I give the highest recommendation to *MRR*'s readership to check their tour dates. If these bands are playing in your 'hood, you'd be a fool not to go.

Other international hardcore bands that are touring this spring/summer are Forca Macabra and Kuolema from Finland (East coast only). Gasmask Terrör from Bordeaux, France is touring the East Coast/Midwest in May with Black Dove from Columbus. Solid Decline from Berlin is touring the Midwest/Southwest/West Coast with Chicago's Canadian Rifle in July and August. Giuda from Firenze, Italy is touring the entire US with Pittsburgh's Aghast in June and July. Ken Sanderson came over recently and played me Gasmask Terrör's and Giuda's LPs. Both bands play hardcore that sounds neither modern nor retro, if that makes sense. Ya know, straightforward hardcore with no gimmicks—pure, pissed-off power-driven type stuff. I was lucky enough to see Solid Decline while I was in Europe last spring. Musically, they are kind of in their own world; they play hardcore that I can only describe as unique, wild, and, inventive. I think people over here that manage to make it out to their shows will be pleasantly surprised. OK, this is the last time I'm gonna plead in this month's column but I strongly urge going out to see these bands. Support international hardcore.

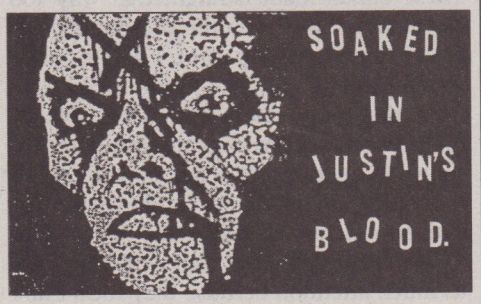
***

Endnotes:

1. Last month we ran an interview with Marie Kanger-Born. For some reason it was not noted that Mariam B. took part in this interview and helped instigate it along with Sarah. Sorry about that Mariam…

2. I need a job. I have always been nearly incapable of finding myself a job. As a result, I have always relied heavily on my friends and acquaintances to secure employment for me. The problem is that every occupation that I've ever had has been nonsensical. So far, I've been a cashier (over ten years ago), bike messenger, photo lab technician, toy store clerk, bicycle shop clerk, dog walker, button press operator, record store clerk, dishwasher (very briefly), and punk magazine coordinator. The only job that I've held for a significant amount of time was the button press gig. Last week I was told in at a job interview that I've had a lot of "interesting" occupations but that I didn't have enough experience to qualify for a job that consisted of buying rich people's groceries. I buy groceries every day so I don't know what this fool was gettin' at, but if you live in San Francisco and know of any "interesting" jobs that an unskilled laborer like myself might qualify for, please let me know. I would rather not work late nights, wear a uniform, or commute outside of SF but I'm game for all kinds of shit otherwise.

3. Playlist for compiling this month's issue: 13th Floor Elevators – *Easter Everywhere* LP (their cover of "Baby Blue" blows my mind every time I hear it), Born Dead Icons – *Salvation On the Knees* LP, Totalitär – everything, Leatherface – *Mush* and *Minx* LPs ("Do the Right Thing" is worth listening to every day), Eddy Current Suppression Ring LP, V/A – *Goot From the Boot* LP (Juggernaut, Putrid Fever, and Grey Shadow tracks rule).



California Dreamin'

When I was a wee teen, I always dreamt of one day moving to San Francisco. Those mental images of perfect weather and a fantasy land where everything was surf all day and party all night. Plus, it was known as the Wild West! Now, after basically three straight weeks of rain I realize how wrong I was about the perfect weather part. Actually, I learned that right away. You can't even go out in the summer after 4 P.M. without a sweatshirt. What the fuck?! And as far as the life of roses that I dreamt of… Ha! This was, after all, a teenage fantasy.

I work my day job in a drafty and windowless warehouse on 16th Street, in San Francisco's Mission District. For those not familiar, 16th Street is one of the few bastions of lawlessness and despair left in the city. During the few times a day I get to venture out of my cavernous shithole of a workplace, the neighborhood doesn't really invoke any sort of relaxation or relief because I have to dodge basketball-sized mounds of human shit, old condoms, and used syringes. As inconvenient as this may be, in a way it's refreshing that there are still places left in the city, and especially the Mission, that are not washed over (yet). This is, after all, real life in one of the most expensive cities in the world and one of the biggest tourist destinations in the country. Yet all you ever see are images of happy families driving their hybrid down the *thrilling* curves of Lombard Street and shopping in Union Square, all the while stepping around the less-fortunate people that they'd rather pretend don't exist.

Coupled with the nearly complete sterile condo-ification and hipsterization of the city, these things really hit on a gut-level and tear apart your soul. I feel like everyday that I work on that block, another organ in my body turns to stone; soon I'll just be another headphone-wearing fucko hovering around in my little bubble (cue the sound of George Jetson's car), attempting to ignore my surroundings and pretending everything's okay.

***

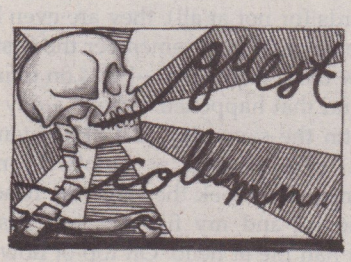
On an equally bummer note, our friends Bastard Sons Of Apocalypse (a.k.a. BSA) were in town recently and played one of the rippin'-est shows I've been to in a while. Every band ruled. Hell, during Needles I attempted to do a (poorly executed) somersault off the stage that resulted in bouncing off my head on the floor, a gash in my arm, and two weeks of really sore ribs. Not as limber as I used to be I guess, but it was 100% worth it. If you've only heard BSA on one of their killer records (or not at all), they are even better experienced live. I remember the first time I saw these loons play—I was on tour with a band that happened to have a day off in Austin the same day that Skitsystem and BSA were playing at Emo's. From the moment they took the stage my head was a-bangin' and my fist was up. Basically, they had me at hello. On top of how great they are as a band, they are such solid gents and a pleasure to be around. Rather unfortunately, on their way back home from this recent tour their van caught fire and literally exploded taking with it all of their

equipment (except Javi's guitar which he heroically rescued from the flaming wreck), all of their record scores from the trip, all their merch, Logan's flannels—I mean everything. It's really a shame but I'm glad no one was hurt. Do *yourself* a favor and at the same time help the band out by grabbing a copy of their new LP *Strangled By The System*. It rules! You can get a copy or ten from tododestruido@gmail.com.

***

One of my favorite records this month is a 7" by a French band named Les Vandales. This EP was recorded in the mid-'80s and never released. Just when you think every old and worthwhile recording has already seen the light of day…I have a minor complaint though—their only contact and the only way to get the record is through a MySpace page that one of the members of the band recently set up. That's fine in and of itself—MySpace is (rather unfortunately) one of the best modes to get whatever it is that you have to promote to the masses. It's a shameful fact. Hell, I have one, too. My problem lies with my inability to contact them through it. I have, on a few occasions now, tried to write the band to snag copies of said record for myself and a few friends, but you can't send a message without being their "friend." So, logically I tried to become their "friend" and on every occasion I've been either "denied" or maybe the request has expired? I don't really know. I'm just saying. We *need* copies of this so if you are one of the members of Les Vandales get in touch with me at justin@maximumrocknroll.com.

PS: I can't believe I just complained about my MySpace drama in a column in *MRR*. For this I'm sorry but if it's gonna put *Loup-Garou* in my hands, it was well worth it.
PPS: Anyone got a spare Crusty Hi-Charge *Truth* 7"?



by John Fahy

I've never been straightedge, nor have I had any desire to be. I do like to drink, but I'm not much of a fan of drugs. Only in the last few years has straightedge seemed more attractive to me. I've met a lot more kids who weren't jingo-istic, closed-minded clowns about it, and are into it for solid, sensible reasons. My introduction as a wee boy of thirteen to what was called both "hardcore" and "straightedge" was a band called Earth Crisis, who played bad metal, put scumbag capitalists like MTV in their thanks lists along with CNN ("for treating our message with respect"), and ended up playing fucking Ozzfest (the launching-pad of a thousand alcohol poisonings). Immediately I could see that "hardcore" sucked, "straightedge" didn't look so cool, and this band was a bunch of thundering assholes. Versions of this same idiotic aesthetic are still around. Straightedge tough-guy gangs weren't and aren't rebellious—it's just show-and-tell and no different from the "thugs" at any suburban high school.

My next introduction, if the first wasn't bad enough, was the clean cut, young republican, yuppie type. The kind of bands with vague edge-break songs, with lyrics about "how you were," and "what once was." The kids that sell their collections of pristine, unscathed fucking Nike sneakers to other aspiring "hardcore" types on howsyouredge.com. The people that are actually petty enough to keep track of who's still edge. Is this hardcore? If so, no thanks. Punk will have to do for now. These bands made straightedge way too big of an issue, and in the process make it look foolish to be a part of. I blame bands like Youth of Today and Chain of Strength for letting these trends get too out of hand (both bands did write some great hardcore songs, to their credit). It's kids who fall for this shit that will never understand that Citizen's Arrest is just plain better than Chain of Strength, but they will never get as much attention because they didn't talk about being straightedge. As a kid trying to get into hardcore all this shit just turned me way off. Straightedge hardcore that was well known and visible was arrogant, sloganeering, and too reminiscent of the jock kids at my school who date-raped girls. It still is.

But straightedge *is* fucking rebellious. Straightedge *is* punk. Drinking at shows, and the party culture in punk in general just waters it down. Drugs at shows are a nuisance and a bummer. It's not like I've never drank at shows, but whenever I do it's with a twinge of guilt. Ever since I was a kid, I never understood drinking at shows. I couldn't understand why anyone would bring in something so normal, so everyday, to an event that was so exciting. Punk was a whole new world of shit to get submerged in. Shows were infrequent, underground, and thrilling. I'd rather mill through the distro tables, listen to the bands, check out all the weirdo kids, and talk to older punks about all this shit I didn't know or understand than get a buzz at the back of the room. There is no threat or danger in drinking or doing drugs. Everybody in this society wants you to fall into that trap and stay complacent, like the hippies did so conveniently.

A band I'm going to see at the end of the month (at This Is For You Fest in Daytona) has made this point in one of their songs. The band is called Sick Fix, and they have fucking furiously-pissed, unsettling, intelligent lyrics about a range of issues including rape, the housing crisis in Baltimore, and as mentioned drinking at shows. The lyric that sums it up is, "can't make a difference when you came to drink." That shit is straight up. This is a straightedge band that lyrically is varied and smart enough to provoke a lot of thought, on top of playing pulverizing, heavy, fast hardcore that makes you want to X up and circle pit yourself into oblivion.

A lot of bands out there are anathema to what I believe; motherfuckers that love money and corrupt business, but hold up the punk banner. A lot of bands out there proclaim to be straightedge hardcore, when they're just misguided jocks. Both are stopping a lot of kids who might want to be involved with either. There is a wealth of awesome straightedge hardcore out there, but it gets shown-up by legions of clowns that are just spoiled yuppies. Like I said, I'm not edge but I think it's a good thing for kids to get into. It's getting watered down by dickheads playing businessman, wanna-be tough guys, and privileged little snobs. Call this shit out as bogus and unacceptable. Life's Blood did.

ENDNOTES:
1. The horror zine is still in the works. Write me if you want to submit. John Fahy, 15011 Lakeside View Dr., Apt. 2402, Fort Myers, FL 33919
2. Check out my little Pickle pants at www.ifbrecords.com. Pickle is releasing damn good records like the Her Breath On Glass LP and the Merkit/Hombrinus Dudes split LP.
3. Florida Punks: please help my friend Joe compile his all-Florida issue of *Seven Inches to Freedom*. Get in touch at: Joe Lachut 2163 Hoople St. Fort Myers, FL 33901, or hiszeroisgone@yahoo.com.

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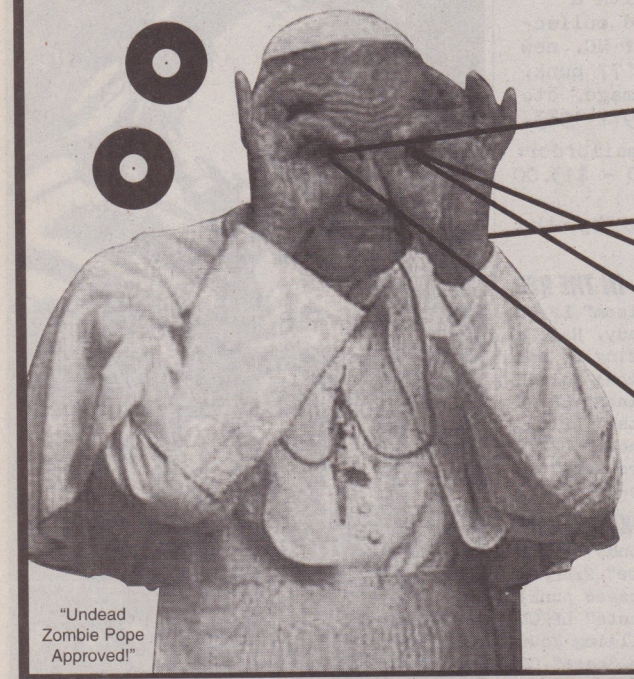

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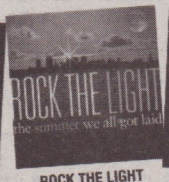

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PEOPS

I WAS BORN IN MONTEVIDEO URUGUAY IN 1967 - MY DAD BROUGHT THE FAMILY TO THE U.S.A. -IT WAS A TOSS-UP BETWEEN AUSTRALIA & THE U.S. -WE ENDED UP IN CHICAGO BECAUSE MY DAD KNEW SOMEONE FROM HIS OLD NIEGHBORHOOD WHO HAD MOVED THERE - I WAS 2 YEARS OLD- WE MOVED TO THE SOUTHWEST SIDE OF CHICAGO - PILSEN NIEGHBORHOOD - I HAD A CATHOLIC UP-BRINGING & A LEFTIST MOM WHICH MADE FOR AN INTERESTING MIX - MY FIRST ENCOUNTERS WITH PUNK WAS THROUGH MY COUSINS WHO LIVED IN NYC -ACTUALLY THEY LIVED IN QUEENS-JACKSON HEIGHTS - I WAS IN 5th GRADE & I THINK I WAS 11 OR 12 - THATS WHERE I FIRST HEARD THE RAMONES & THE SEX PISTOLS - IT WAS MY FIRST EXPOSURE TO PUNK BUT THINKING DIFFERENTLY HAD ALREADY BEEN SPAWNED BY MY UPBRINGING - IN THE VERY EARLY 80's I BECAME A B-BOY - AT THE TIME THERE WAS NOT MUCH PUNK IN CHICAGO SO I GOT INTO THE B-BOY THING & DID A LOT OF HEADSPINNING- I WAS LISTENING TO T. LAROC & JAZZY JAY & AFRIKA BAMBATTA & THE SOUL SONIC FORCE - EVEN GRANDMASTER FLASH & THE FURIOUS FIVE -THE COMMERCIALIZATION STARTED TO KILL THE B-BOY SCENE & IT JUST STARTED VANISHING - AT THAT TIME I KNEW I WAS GOING TO GET BACK INTO PUNK & I WAS ALSO DEVELOPING AN INTEREST IN ACTIVISM - I THOUGHT THEY WERE THE SAME THING -MY DAD WAS MORE CONSERVATIVE SO I STARTED BEING A CLOSET PUNK- GOING OUT & PUTTING MY HAIR UP- I ALSO REALIZED VERY QUICKLY THAT NOT EVERY-ONE IN THE PUNK SCENE IS AN ACTIVIST & THAT I WAS RESPONSIBLE TO MAKE THAT HAPPEN- IT WAS LIKE THE D.I.Y. ETHIC WITH-OUT REALIZING THATS WHAT IT WAS - IT WAS A WEIRD TIME IT WAS AN ERA OF OB-SORPTION FOR ME - I WANTED TO TAKE EVERY-THING IN - IT WAS ALSO A SCAREY TIME AS NOT EVERYBODY WANTED TO WORK TOGETHER SO THERE WERE SOME CON-FLICTING ELEMENTS SO IT TOOK

-TIME TO SIFT THROUGH & LINK UP WITH OTHER PUNKS WHO SAW THE POT-ENTIAL IN REBELLING - NOT JUST AGAINST MOM & DAD BUT AGAINST THE HIGHER POWERS OF OP-PRESSION - I THINK SOME OF US REALLY TOOK THE BANDS WE WERE LISTENING TO TO HEART - WE REALLY BE-LIEVED IN IT & WE BELIEV-ED IN EACH OTHER - AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 90s I STARTED A PROJECT THAT BECAME MY BAND - LOS CRUDOS - ALL I CAN SAY IS WHAT STARTED AS AN IDEA & WHAT I THOUGHT WOULD JUST BE A NEIGHBORHOOD BAND TOTALLY BLEW UP & PEOP-LE REALLY WANTED TO HEAR WHAT WE HAD TO SAY - BEYOND THE NEIGHBORHOOD - IT WAS WHERE PUNK & OUR POL-ITICS WERE REALLY PLAYING OFF EACH OTHER & WERE MOST EFFECTIVE

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY - 10/02/2K6 - MRR HOUSE SF CA

MARTIN IS AN AMAZING & CHARISMATIC PERSON & PERFORMER - I HAD A REALLY FUN TIME HANGING OUT WITH HIM AT THE MRR HOUSE & I FEEL BAD THAT THIS PEOPS HAS TAKEN SO LONG TO GET PRINTED! - I'M NOT SURE HOW LONG EXACTLY MARTIN HAS BEEN VOLUNTEERING AT MRR BUT I DO KNOW THAT HE WAS THE FRONTMAN FOR LOS CRUDOS (AWESOME CHICAGO LATINO PUNK BAND) IN THE 1990S - ONE OF MY NUMEROUS FONDEST MEMORIES IN THE MID-'90S IN THE LOWER EAST SIDE OF NYC WAS OUTSIDE OF A LOS CRUDOS SHOW (I THINK AT UMBRELLA? OR BULLET SPACE?) GETTING MY T-SHIRT SILK-SCREENED ON THE SPOT (I HAD TO STRIP DOWN - SCANDALOUS!!) - MARTIN IS CURRENTLY STILL FRONTING THE BAND LIMP WRIST AND WORKING ON SOME NEWBANDS - N.N. AND NEEDLES - HE HAS BEEN WORKING ON A PHOTOZINE FOR QUITE SOMETIME AND STILL WORKING FOR MRR. - HIS CONTACT IS MARTINCRUDO@YAHOO.COM TO CONTACT FLY PLEASE EMAIL FLY@BWAY.NET (PUT MRR IN THE SUBJECT SO I KNOW ITS NOT SPAM) - PEOPS ZINES & DOG DAYZ ZINES NOW AVAILABLE CHEAP FROM .MICROCOSMPUBLISHING.COM - IF YOU WANT TO SEND ME SNAIL MAIL PLEASE SEND TO FLY PO BOX 1318 COOPER STN NYC NY 10276

MRR NEWS

MRR NEWS FOR ISSUE #298 COMPILED BY ARIEL CELESTE

BRIAN CHILDERS, R.I.P. NOVEMBER 10, 1965 - NOVEMBER 17, 2007

By Micheal Dean

Brian Josef Childers passed away on November 17, 2007 in Washington DC. He had just turned 42. The cause of death was organ failure from alcohol abuse. Brian was an amazing guy, and loved by many people.

He sang in the NYC hardcore band, Crawlpappy. I had the privilege of playing guitar in Brian's hardcore band The Beef People when he lived in Virginia in the early '80s. He played bass and sang some in my San Francisco band, Bomb, for one tour. He also sang in the band Drooler, in Berlin.

While living in Germany, he traveled as a tour manager with many bands, including Murphy's Law, Boo Yaa Tribe, The Cords (Netherlands), Fleischmann (Germany), and Mr. Ed Jumps The Gun (Germany).

I remember when Brian lived in the Red Hook section of Brooklyn, which is literally the last exit to Brooklyn, and the setting of the novel by the same name. Rough place, but he felt at home. He showed me the spot three blocks from his apartment where some kid shot him through the shoulder from a distance for target practice. Brian thought the kid was aiming for his head and missed. Brian Childers was one tough motherfucker, but was still as sweet as a person could be.

Brian also lived in Cleveland, Saudi Arabia, and Athens, Ohio. He has many friends all over the world who miss his enormous spirit, hearty laughter, and remarkable mind. You can see photos of Brian, read more history, and hear MP3s of him singing at: www.kittyfeet.com/beef.htm

Photo credit: Barbara Vaughan. Used with permission.

AT LEAST 94 KILLED IN KENYA ELECTION PROTESTS

AP

NAIROBI, Kenya: Police battled thousands of opposition supporters across Kenya who charge President Mwai Kibaki stole his way to re-election, and several officers said they had orders to shoot to kill to quell the violence that has killed at least 94 people.

The violence started in the days after the vote, stretching from Nairobi's shantytowns, which are home to tens of thousands of opposition supporters, to the Rift Valley and the tourist-friendly coast. "We have been rigged out, we are not going to accept defeat," said 24-year-old James Onyango, who lives in Nairobi's Kibera slum. "We are ready to die and we're ready for serious killings."

An Associated Press reporter saw a man who had been shot in the head being carried in a blanket, and the men around him said he had been shot by police. Police were not immediately available for comment. Another Kibera resident, 14-year-old Selina Angeyo, said police had shot her brother and another man in the stomach. Shortly after she spoke to reporters she was arrested and taken away in a marked police vehicle, crying.

Teams of riot police fired shots into the air and tear gas into homes and businesses; in one home, a woman and her four children ran out, retching. "We were just hiding from the shots," said Dorothy Nyangasi, frantically pouring water over the eyes of her 6-month-old son Daniel. Other residents said that they had not been able to find food since shops closed for elections and trouble began over the delayed vote-counting. A woman shouted "hungry! hungry!" at passing journalists.

The violence has killed at least 94 people since across the country, police and witnesses said, although the tally was likely far higher. Three police officers told The Associated Press independently that they had been ordered to shoot to kill to stop the rioters. "Yes there is a shoot to kill order," said one police official, who like the others asked that his name not be used because he is not authorized to speak to the media. A government spokesman denied such an order was given.

Raila Odinga, the fiery opposition leader who came in second according to the official results, compared Kibaki to a military dictator who "seized power through the barrel of the gun." Odinga, who had been leading early results and public opinion polls, also postponed a planned rally in Nairobi's Uhuru Park — where protesters seeking multi-party democracy used to gather in the early 1990s. Police had warned the opposition not to hold the rally. Odinga instead called on 1 million people to gather. "We are calling for mass action," said Odinga, who had been leading early results and public opinion polls. "We will inform police of the march. We will march wearing black arm bands because we are mourning."

The United States said it was concerned over "serious problems" during the counting of votes. Those alleging vote tampering may pursue legal remedies and should be able, consistent with respect for freedom of speech, to make their case publicly. We call on the judiciary to play its role expeditiously," the statement from the U.S. embassy in Kenya said.

Kibaki, 76, was sworn in almost immediately after the results were

announced. Within minutes, the slums exploded into fresh violence. In the coastal city of Mombasa, protesters looted shops shouting "No Raila, No Peace!" Suspicions over rigging were fueled by the fact that the opposition took most of the parliamentary seats in the vote, but Kibaki still won the election.

The bloodshed is a stunning turn of events in one of the most developed countries in Africa, with a booming tourism industry and one of the continent's highest growth rates. Many observers saw the campaign as the greatest test yet of this young, multiparty democracy and expressed great disappointment as the process descended into chaos.

Kibaki's supporters say he has turned Kenya's economy into an east African powerhouse, with an average growth rate of 5 percent. He won by a landslide in 2002, ending 24 years in power by the notoriously corrupt Daniel arap Moi. But Kibaki's anti-graft campaign has largely been seen as a failure, and the country still struggles with tribalism and poverty.

The election violence had a disturbing tribal undertone in the slums, where youths shouted ethnic slurs. Kibaki, from the Kikuyu tribe, has been accused of maintaining the tribal patronage system of the Moi years. Odinga is a Luo, another major tribe.

IS LATIN AMERICA HEADING FOR AN ARMS RACE?

From an article on csmonitor.com

São Paulo, Brazil - Increased defense spending by Venezuela, Brazil, and Ecuador, coupled with significant arms purchases by Chile and Colombia, may mark the start of an arms race in South America—a region that hasn't seen a major war between nations in decades. "There is a real risk of it escalating and it could become very dangerous," says Michael Shifter, the vice president of policy at the Inter-American Dialogue in Washington. Concern has grown in the wake of recent purchases by Venezuela and Brazil. Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez, flush with oil money, has spent freely on attack and transport helicopters, Russian fighter planes, and 100,000 Kalashnikov rifles. In neighboring Brazil, which, with half of Latin America's landmass and population, President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva recently asked Congress to allocate 10.13 billion reais ($5.6 billion)—a 53 percent increase—for its 2008 military budget.

Those increases came after Chile invested significant sums earlier in the decade. Colombia has received hundreds of millions of dollars in US drug-war aid for military purchases. And now Ecuador is also spending more on weapons. "I think that it is done in different places for different motivations," says Mr. Shifter, who testified before the US Congress last year on the implications of Venezuela's increased military spending. "[Mr.] Chávez is using this as part of mobilizing the country and thinking of a possible attack from the US. In Chile, it is much more about giving the armed forces what they want. Colombia spends because a lot of the [US] aid comes in the form of military equipment." The problem, continues Shifter, is that "there is tremendous mistrust between countries...if you don't know what your neighbors' intentions are, then it is natural is to build up as much as you can to prepare for any contingency."

Some South American nations worry about Chávez's ambitions and do not want him to gain a significant military edge. "Brazil won't say it, but Chávez's build up is what has made it invest in its military," says Reserve Col. Geraldo Lesbat Cavagnari, coordinator of the Strategic Studies Group at Unicamp University in São Paulo.

Brazil and Venezuela already vie for political supremacy in South America with Chávez bringing together the radical leftists under his socialist banner and President Lula leading a more measured coalition of social democrats. At this point, the two leaders are friends and the two nations have no border quarrels or historical feuds that could flare up. But there are tensions between Venezuela and Colombia over gas-rich territorial waters and border areas where Colombia's FARC guerrillas are active. And Veneuzela has made claims on the western part of Guyana.

But few people believe Chávez is buying weapons in order to attack a neighbor. He has warned opponents of his Bolivian ally Evo Morales that "rifle and machine guns will thunder" if they try to topple President Morales but Venezuela still does not have a military machine capable of shock and awe, analysts said. In addition, its army is one-third the size of Brazil's, and distinctly less experienced and battle hardened than neighboring Colombia's. Any attempts to settle territorial claims on western Guyana would give both the US and Britain, a former colonial power, reasons to enter the fray.

Yet the thought of an unpredictable leader with modern weaponry concerns some of the continent's moderates. Moreover, many analysts say the region cannot afford to devote large amounts of money to weaponry. Poverty is still a major problem in most South American countries and that—along with infrastructure, justice, and education—is seen as a more worthy priority than submarines or fighter planes. "An arms race on our continent will oblige us to depart from the path of giving priority to investments in social programs," says Jose Sarney, a Brazilian senator and a fierce critic of Chávez. "Having a military power on the continent is dangerous for both Brazil and...Latin America."

Nevertheless, no one wants to get left behind, especially Brazil. Investment in modern weaponry, analysts agree, is long overdue for South America's biggest nation. Years of neglect have left much of Brazil's war machine obsolete or in disrepair. Meanwhile, its priorities have changed from worrying about Argentina in the south to protecting its jungle frontiers on the north and west and its territorial waters that are home to sizeable new finds of oil and gas.

"There are very real security concerns that are being neglected," says Martin Joyce, the South America defense analyst for Jane's. "One is the Amazon region where drug traffickers are operating with impunity. Secondly, we are also seeing an increased presence of Colombian guerrillas, and that requires mobility and that is why we see helicopters and military airlift high on the priority list. Then there is the new oil reserves. Part of the reason for the procurement of a nuclear submarine is because they said they need to protect those resources. Venezuela comes fairly low down the list."

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ANARCHY IN THE AISLES?

from an article on anarchistnews.org

This is the season of frenetic shopping, but for a devious few people it's also the season of spirited shopdropping. Otherwise known as reverse shoplifting, shopdropping involves surreptitiously putting things in stores, rather than illegally taking them out, and the motivations vary.

Anti-consumerist artists slip replica products packaged with political messages onto shelves while religious proselytizers insert pamphlets between the pages of gay-and-lesbian readings at book stores. Self-published authors sneak their works into the "new releases" section, while personal trainers put their business cards into weight-loss books, and aspiring professional photographers make homemade cards—their Web site address included, of course—and covertly plant them into stationery-store racks. "Everyone else is pushing their product, so why shouldn't we?" said Jeff Eyrich, a producer for several independent bands, who puts stacks of his bands' CDs—marked "free"—on music racks at Starbucks whenever the cashiers look away.

Though not new, shopdropping has grown in popularity in recent years, especially as artists have gathered to swap tactics at Web sites like Shopdropping.net, and groups like the Anti-Advertising Agency, a political art collective, do training workshops open to the public. Retailers fear the practice may annoy shoppers and raise legal or safety concerns, particularly when it involves children's toys or trademarked products. "Our goal at all times is to provide comfortable and distraction-free shopping," said Bethany Zucco, a spokeswoman for Target. "We think this type of activity would certainly not contribute to that goal." She said she did not know of any shopdropping at Target stores.

But Packard Jennings does. An artist who lives in Oakland, Calif., he said that for the last seven months he had been working on a new batch of his Anarchist action figure that he began shopdropping this week at Target and Wal-Mart stores in the San Francisco Bay Area. "When better than Christmas to make a point about hyper-consumerism?" asked Mr. Jennings, 37, whose action figure comes with tiny accessories including a gas mask, bolt cutter, and two Molotov cocktails, and looks convincingly like any other doll on most toy-store shelves. Putting it in stores and filming people as they try to buy it as they interact with store clerks, Mr. Jennings said he hoped to show that even radical ideology gets commercialized. He said for safety reasons he retrieves the figures before customers take them home.

Jason Brody, lead singer for an independent pop-rock band in the East Village, said his group recently altered its shopdropping tactics to cater to the holiday rush. Normally the band, the Death of Jason Brody, slips promotional CD singles between the pages of *The Village Voice* newspaper and into the racks at large music stores. But lately, band members have been slipping into department stores and putting stickers with logos for trendy designers like Diesel, John Varvatos, and 7 for All Mankind on their CDs, which they then slip into the pockets of designer jeans or place on counters. "Bloomingdale's and 7 for All Mankind present the Death of Jason Brody, our pick for New York band to watch in 2008," read a sticker on one of the CDs placed near a register at Bloomingdales. "As thanks for trying us on, we're giving you this special holiday gift." Bloomingdales and 7 for All Mankind declined to comment.

For pet store owners, the holidays usher in a form of shopdropping with a touch of buyer's remorse. What seemed like a cute gift idea at the time can end up being dumped back at a store, left discretely to roam the aisles. "After Easter, there's a wave of bunnies; after Halloween, it's black cats; after Christmas, it's puppies," said Don Cowan, a spokesman for the store chain Petco, which in the month after each of those holidays sees 100 to 150 pets abandoned in its aisles or left after hours in cages in front of stores. Snakes have been left in crates, mice and hamsters surreptitiously dropped in dry aquariums, even a donkey left behind after a store's annual pet talent show, Mr. Cowan said.

Bookstores are especially popular for self-promotion and religious types of shopdropping. At BookPeople in Austin, Tex., local authors have been putting bookmarks advertising their own works in books on similar topics. At Mac's Backs Paperbacks, a used bookstore in Cleveland Heights, Ohio, employees are dealing with the influx of shopdropped works by local poets and playwrights by putting a price tag on them and leaving them on the shelves. At Powell's Books in Portland, Ore., religious groups have been hitting the magazines in the science section with fliers featuring Christian cartoons, while their adversaries have been moving Bibles from the religion section to the fantasy/science-fiction section.

This week an arts group in Oakland, the Center for Tactical Magic, began shopdropping neatly folded stacks of homemade T-shirts into Wal-Mart and Target stores in the San Francisco Bay Area. The shirts feature radical images and slogans like one with the faces of Karl Marx, Che Guevara and Mikhail Bakunin, a Russian anarchist. It says, "Peace on Earth. After we overthrow capitalism." "Our point is to put a message, not a price tag, on them," said Aaron Gach, 33, a spokesman for the group.

Mr. Jennings's anarchist action figure met with a befuddled reaction from a Target store manager in El Cerrito, Calif. "I don't think this is a product that we sell," the manager said as Mr. Jennings pretended to be a customer trying to buy it. "It's definitely antifamily, which is not what Target is about."

One of the first reports of shopdropping was in 1989, when a group called the Barbie Liberation Organization sought to make a point about sexism in children's toys by swapping the voice hardware of Barbie dolls with those in GI Joe figures before putting the dolls back on store shelves.

Scott Wolfson, a spokesman for the federal Consumer Product Safety Commission, said he was not sure if shopdropping was illegal but that some forms of it could raise safety concerns because the items left on store shelves might not abide by labeling requirements and federal safety standards.

Ryan Watkins-Hughes, 28, a photographer from Brooklyn, teamed up with four other artists to shopdrop canned goods with altered labels at Whole Foods stores in New York City this week. "In the holidays, people get into this head-down, plow-through-the-shopping autopilot mode," Mr. Watkins-Hughes said "'I got to get a dress for Cindy, get a stereo for Uncle John, go buy canned goods for the charity drive and get back home.'" "Warhol took the can into the gallery. We bring the art to the can," he said, adding that the labels consisted of photographs of places he had traveled combined with the can's original bar code so that people could still buy them. "What we do is try to inject a brief moment of wonder that helps wake them up from that rushed stupor," he said, pausing to add, "That's the true holiday spirit, isn't it?"

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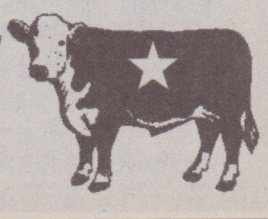

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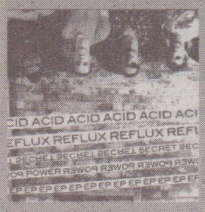
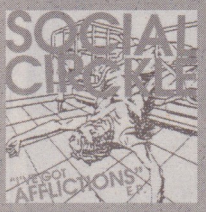
NW-21 BRAIN HANDLE- LP



NW-20 ACID REFLUX- 2nd ep

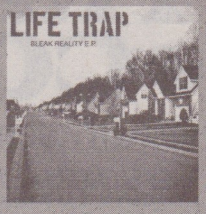


NW-19 SOCIAL CIRCKLE-2nd ep

NW-18 CITIZENS PATROL-ep

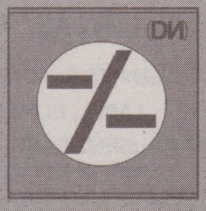
NW-17 NO BULLSHIT vol.3-ep

NW-16 WARKRIME- Lp/Cd



NW-15 LIFE TRAP- ep

NW-14 DESTROY LA- ep



NW-13 DOUBLE NEGATIVE lp/Cd

MORE AVAILABLE RELEASES:

NW-10 WARKRIME- "Give War A Chance" ep
NW-12 ACID REFLUX- "EP" ep
NW-07 CARDIAC ARREST- "Life's A Dead End" ep
NW-06 VERBAL ABUSE- "Just an American Band" Lp
NW-01 GOVERNMENT WARNING- "No Way Out" ep

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PRINTING AND REPLICATION FOR INDEPENDENT RECORD LABELS AND BANDS SINCE 1994

2007: A Year in Reviews

Wherein the distinguished staff of *MAXIMUMROCKNROLL* wax poetic about their favorite records of the last twelve months.

Allan McNaughton

Although these are in a particular numerical order, they are not necessarily in any particular numerical order, got it?

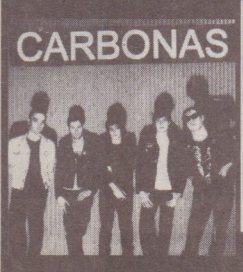
1. STATUES - "New People Make Us Nervous" 12" (Radio 81)
You know those statues in the park, the ones you never notice? Well, while you were going about your business not noticing them, these STATUES sneak into recording studios and lay down *the perfect mod punk powerpop punk* and you still don't notice. *Smokin' hot floor filler: "The Last Stand."*

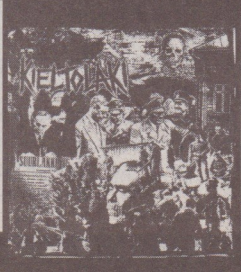
2. TRANZMITORS - "Tranzmitors" LP (Deranged)
A few months ago I was in Vancouver for three days, and on my last night TRANZMITORS were supporting the scab SHAM 69. Perhaps foolishly, I stayed up all night drinking whisky with my brother instead. The singles and EPs leading up to this album set me up with unrealistic expectations so I was a bit disappointed at first. It's a grower though. At first the added keyboard sounded a bit circus-y, but with each successive listen, the hits made their presence known. Now when when when are they going to be down our way? *Smashy 'n' Nicey's Pop Pick: "Everyone Wants To Lose Control."*

3. CRIMINAL DAMAGE - "No Solution" LP (Feral Ward)
This guy Billy I vaguely know has got no front teeth and tons of faded tattoos (spiderwebs, etc). He's had the same pair of patched-up tight jeans for about fifteen years and they are now waterproof from years of wear and from having rollie fag ash rubbed on them. He's got a crusty traveler mullet and none of his t-shirts have sleeves. He hasn't bought a new punk record in years. I played him a tape of this thinking he'd be well into it, but he called it Yank skate punk. You can't win 'em all boys. I still think it's a blinder. *ICF Terrace Anthem: "Heat."*

4. LOSER LIFE - "I Have Ghosts And I Have Ghosts" LP (Magic Bullet)
Billy (see above) has probably got some long lost family in Bakersfield. However, if you put the CRIM DAM record on at a house party there, all the spiky cider heads would be singing along from the first verse as if they knew all the words. That's because you can sell any old shit to thick Central Valley scum-just ask Neutron Ron, he's been milking that scene for years. LOSER LIFE are just the latest in a long line of Bakersfield B.O. boy bands to try and exploit all that the punk rock cash cow has to offer, before retreating to their suburban mansions and feasting on plate after plate of Denny's pancakes. *Sunburned Hand Of The Band: "Forget My Name."*

5. SIGNAL LOST - "Prosthetic Screams" LP (Prank)
They say nice guys finish last, but in this case, they finish fifth. Ha ha! That's a joke. But the humor is in the truth. Like Mykel Board signing up for Match.com, this ticks all the boxes. Anthemic, crushing, melodic, etc. Unfortunately, through, some bizarre freak *Weird Science*-like accident involving a six-pack of Lone Star, two cans of Sparks, a mislaid box of SIGNAL LOST





enhanced CD-Rs, and Timmy Hefner's stolen iPhone, this band now only exists on MySpace. *Download Of The Century: "Terminal.mp3."*

6. THE VICIOUS - "Alienated" LP (Feral Ward)
Another one on Feral Ward (or should I say, *Virile Sword*?!) Canuck Yannick sure knows how to pick 'em. Fair enough. He lives in Portland, his band is named after a WIPERS song (probably) and he signs a band that sounds a bit like a Scandinavian version of said band. (Not TRAGEDY, THE WIPERS; keep up for fuck's sake). I wonder if the foreign bands that sign to Feral Ward realize it's not a proper label with a marketing dept., regional sales teams, and a cross-promotional product placement division? They should really have more ambition. *Jorden Den Ar Var: "Obsessive."*

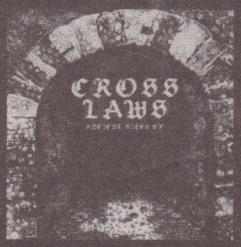
7. YOUNG OFFENDERS - "Situations" EP (Parts Unknown) and "Trelawny's Army/Angels" (Art Of The Underground)
An Englishman, an Irishman, and two Yanks walk into a bar. True story, I shit you not my brother. *Je te ne merde pas mon frere.* This is my favorite band that's in existence. The shit I've heard that isn't released or recorded or written yet except by the little YOUNG OFFENDERS that I keep in the doll house upstairs in my attic (in my imagination), man, that shit is going to floor you. *Northen Soul All-Nighter: "Trelawny's Army."*

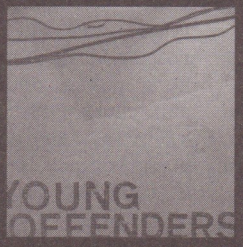
8. GENTLEMAN JESSE AND HIS MEN - "I Don't Wanna Know..." EP (Douche Master)
You cannot deny the effortless perfection of this song. Imagine if JOE JACKSON never went shit. You heard it here first kids, Powerpop is *back!!!!!!!!!* Don't worry, I won't say I told you so. *Is she really going out with him? "I Don't Wanna Know (Where You Been Tonight."*

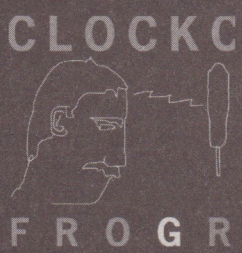
9. TYVEK - "Summer Burns" 2xEP (What's Your Rupture?)
I think this is what "the kids" (i.e. 35 year old specky anglophile librarian self-important internet dwelling record nerds) are calling 'Weird Punk'? I'm not sure. It doesn't sound that weird to me, just good. Plus points for the inventive packaging/format. Negative points for making me get up and turn/change the record so much. *Amoeba cashier's favorite track (like I asked?): "Needles Drop."*

10. HARD SKIN - "Make My Tea" EP (Feral Ward) and HARD SKIN / FUCKED UP - split EP (No Future?!)
Another year, another tossed-off dose of genius from the cheekiest chappies in Gypsy Hill. If you were going to pay tribute to Steve Jones, what better way than turning up at his work in your skin-tight red strides with a note that starts, "Oi Jonesy You Cunt!"? Maybe by covering his second-best band's best song on a split with Canada's answer to PINK FLOYD? *Only Fools And Horses: "Make My Tea."*

You Could Have Been Good Enough, But You Weren't Quite Good Enough: LA FRACTION *La Vie Revée* LP (Feral Ward), MIKA MIKO *666* 12" (PPM), COMPLICATIONS *Blinded/Coffin* 7" (Feral Ward), LOOK BACK AND LAUGH *State Of Illusion* 12", THOMAS FUNCTION *Insignificants* EP (going by memory alone this would have made the top ten, but I can't find my copy to give it another listen... it was brilliant though), BAYONETTES *We're Doomed* EP (Deranged), SEX VID *Tania* EP (Dom America), WAR ALL THE TIME/WHOLE IN THE HEAD split EP, SURRENDER *Last White Flag* EP, REPERCUSSIONS *Eleven Songs* 12" (540), THE FALL *Reformation: Post TLC* LP, NEVERENDING PARTY *Dog Eat Rat Fight* EP...







Bob Goldie

Top ten lists can be tougher than you'd think. Where does one start? Being a shitworker here at MRR, you are obviously exposed to a lot of stuff that's come out during the course of a year, but naturally you end up favoring the things you became more familiar with either by reviewing them or owning them. Undoubtedly some real gems have passed me by without notice. Also, some of my favorite records this year actually came out last year, but it took a while to track down a copy or for something to grow on me. A few of the albums that fall under this category include the EXPLODING HEARTS Shattered *LP, VICIOUS* Alienated *LP, and the JAY REATARD* Blood Visions *LP. Another concern arises with variety in style. Because of this, I feel pressured to narrow down all the great '82 US hardcore-type of stuff to just one or two. Same with the good powerviolence bands or any other genre I dig. With all that in mind, this is the result.*

LIFE TRAP - "Bleak Reality" EP (No Way)
Some people bitch and moan about all these new bands that sound like it's the early '80s and claim they have nothing new to offer. What the fuck do they want, metal or emo mixed in? How about having it slowed way down dude, or better yet, some avant-garde noise? Fuck that. This is punk thrash in all its purity. It's not retro, it's just time-honored hardcore the way it should be. Six songs here by LIFE TRAP, and they all blaze with intensity and great lyrics and epitomize everything that rules about this shit.

FREEZE - "Live From Cape Cod 1980" LP (Schizophrenic)
This is one of those rare moments when some unreleased gems from a band's golden era get suddenly discovered in a box in somebody's musty basement. And what a freakin' treasure it is! A whole album of "Refrigerator Heaven" and

"I Hate Tourists"-era songs from one of finest bands of all time! There's a bunch of songs never heard before as well as some familiar tunes that are done differently. Yes, it's a live record, but the soundboard recording sounds more like a 19-song demo. Awesome.

GET DESTROYED - s/t EP (625 Thrash)
I'm a sucker for the unabashed CROSSED OUT/INFEST worship that materializes in these songs. A few other EPs along the same lines came out this year like SCAPEGOAT or WEAK MINDS, but this one takes the cake for me as being the best of the bunch. Ten tracks of societal hatred.

WASTED TIME - "No Shore" EP (Grave Mistake)
This band is hands-down one of the best traditional hardcore outfits to emerge in the last five years. Seeing these maniacs with the equally amazing GOVERNMENT WARNING was the musical highlight of last summer. Listening to this second EP, which is just as good-if not better-than their debut, has helped to restore my confidence in the current state of hardcore music. So what if they wear the NEGATIVE FX/APPROACH influence a little too proudly on their sleeves-this fucking rules!

REGULATIONS - "Different Needs" EP (Havoc)
This is one of those records that by the time your turntable needle makes three rotations, you know immediately you're going to love it. These Swedes flawlessly capture the early-'80s West Coast sound that existed somewhere between hardcore and melodic punk. I'm talking about shit like the GERMS and the CIRCLE JERKS. And what's even better is that they add just enough of a touch of garage rock and roll to keep this from falling into pitiable accusations of being totally retro.

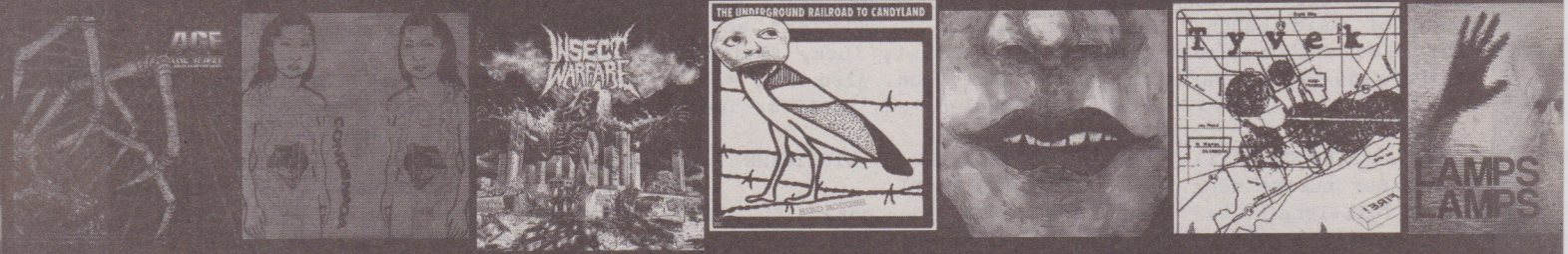
CROSS LAWS - "Ancient Rites" EP (Sorry State)
This is the third EP by this band, but it's only with this record that I finally got to hear them. And holy shit, if their other two records sound anything like this seven-song fucking nugget of raw NOTA/POISON IDEA-inspired punk, then I need to seriously start looking at people's trade lists!

ANOTHER SINKING SHIP - "Works Well in a Crowded Area" EP (Roku)
Within seconds of hearing this Finnish band for the first time, I was immediately hooked on the raspy and melodic sound reminiscent of "Nine Years Later" by BORN AGAINST, mid-period stuff by ARTICLES OF FAITH, or even a bit of LEATHERFACE. Some of the songs are concerned with issues ("Fat Western Man" being my favorite), and some are personal, but all are excellently written and performed. This will be a band to watch out for.

CHEAP TIME - s/t EP (Sweet Rot)
This was a jaw-dropping surprise when I first threw it on because I was expecting mod revival or something judging by the cover art. Instead, what I heard was some loud and sloppy, punk rock and roll very much akin to good-era RED CROSS, VOM, or the PENETRATORS. And just like those bands, CHEAP TIME pays homage to the roots of punk-'60s garage and '70s glam-with these three trashed-out rockers.

PRESS GANG - s/t EP (Shock & Awe/Hardware)
This awesome German group is just one of the latest representing the European hardcore revival that's taking the world by storm. Like many of these bands, PRESS GANG has a healthy dose of late-'70s/early-'80s punk veneration, but they also mix in a little European thrash angst to produce something new- and old-sounding at the same time. Imagine mixing up DS-13 with the CHAIN GANG or something. The future of things to come, I hope.

SPEARS - "People Are Bad" EP (Choking Hazard)
The PINK LINCOLNS and HATED YOUTH were two of the finest bands to emerge out of the shitty swampland known as Florida. Both groups captured the sense of isolation and misery inherent in a suburban, materialistic strip-mall society dominated by rednecks and America's lowest tier of middle class riff raff. Well, now Chris Barrows and Gary Strickland-singers for both of those groups-are back and not a damn thing has changed with their outlook on life or their musical tastes since! There's no excuse for getting lame as you get older, and these cats prove it.



Cissie Scurlock

LPs/CDs

TOTALITÄR - "Vi Ar Eliten" LP (Prank)
This one seems like a no-brainer to me. TOTALITÄR has already proven that they can stad the test of time and this LP is further testament to the fact that they are one of the greatest hardcore bands ever. The title track has this super fucked guitar part that leads into a solo and I gush every time I hear it.

SKITKIDS - "Besöket Vid Krubban" CD (Not Enough)
I hate CDs so I continue to eagerly await the vinyl release of this. Even still, I've listened to this almost every day in the interim. Hardcore that manages to

stand out without any gimmicks-it's the drive and the hooks that warrant all the repeated listens.

V/A - "Propaganda Is Hippies" LP (Kamaset Levyt)
Finland is no stranger to producing great punk, however in 2007 the scene there had an exceptionally quality year. *Propaganda Is Hippies* is one of the many Finnish must-haves from '07. Rarely do I hear a compilation without cringing during at least one of the songs, but this collection has beaten the odds.

PIOGGIA NERA - "Teatri Di Menzogne" LP (Nuclear Chaos/Calimocho/Nkin Rehorz)
PIOGGIA NERA was one of the surprises of the year. I'd never heard of them until I arrived at *MRR*. The music is not quite hardcore but it's very edgy and disturbed sounding. The guitar plays lots of weird, neat melodies and the overall sound is kinda off and subdued in an intriguing way.

KYKLOOPPIEN SUKUPUUTTO - LP (Spild Af Vinyl/Hate/Tuska & Ahdistus)
The hardest-to-spell/funnest-to-pronounce band name of the year award goes to these Finnish tweakers. This LP has twelve tracks of unruly, ingenious hardcore. I wonder if they are as crazy live as their sound would lead one to believe.

EL BANDA - "Przejdzie Ci El Banda" LP (Pasazer/Trujaca Fala)
Since my arrival in SF, Justin and I have spent many nights at the compound listening to nothing but Polish hardcore. EL BANDA certainly brings to mind POST REGIMENT, ARMIA, and the like and I also think they effectively mirror the power of said bands. They have that same unique sound that has always made Polish hardcore stand out.

GAUZE - "5th" CD (XXX)
No-brainer numero deux. The fifth GAUZE full-length is relentless. As always with GAUZE, mind blown. They come up with the most original parts and then play them faster and crazier than anyone. Their song structures make no sense but sound so good. Plus, they're like the oldest men playing hardcore...granddaddies producing some of the most intense music in the world and putting every other band to shame.

SIGNAL LOST - "Prosthetic Screams" LP (Prank)
I think SIGNAL LOST fully realized the sound that they have always been going for on *Prosthetic Screams*. The songs are well-thought out and range in style from dark and moody to the occasional fast hardcore ripper, but everything manages to flow and not sound like patchwork. This year was not a great one for non-hardcore, in my opinion, so this LP was a breath of fresh air.

HEX DISPENSERS - LP (Alien Snatch)
The HEX DISPENSERS play raw and catchy-as-fuck songs, and every now and then they let some dark undertones seep through. The riffs build up on one another but the overall sound remains simple punk. That's pretty much the basic recipe for music that I love.

LA FRACTION - "La Vie Revée" LP (Feral Ward)
I saw LA FRACTION a ton of times this past year. Listening to this record will never beat seeing them play on a boat in the middle of a lake, but *La Vie Revée* warranted many spins over the spring and summer. LA FRACTION perfected the moody, melodic punk thing on their first record and they've continued to put out quality music since.

7"s
COMPLICATIONS - "Blinded/Coffin" (Feral Ward)
"Blinded" probably got more listens than any other song this year. I'm a habits type of person so I woke up every single day this summer and played this song. Then I would go for a walk, come home, and listen to it again-then later on in the day too. Sometimes I'd listen to "Coffin" and it's all right but, fuck, "Blinded" is so damn good. Also keep your peepers peeled 'cos an LP is imminent.

SKITKIDS / NIGHTMARE - split EP (HG:Fact)
Both sides ooze with intensity and excellence but the SKITKIDS song "Äckliga Jävlar" makes most other music sound irrelevant. I think this record is fairly hard to come by so if you find one, I'd highly suggest snatchin' it up.

WASTED TIME - "No Shore" EP / GOVERNMENT WARNING "Arrested" EP (Grave Mistake)
A lot of hardcore these days is going for a throwback sound. That's not necessarily a bad thing but some bands are better at it than others. I think these two are at the head of the pack. GOVERNMENT WARNING veers from ADOLESCENTS-type anthems to Boston-styled snot-filled hardcore. Their songs get stuck in my head for days on end. The overall feel of WASTED TIME is anything but tame-of all the Richmond/Raleigh /Virginia Beach bands, these guys seem the most pissed and have the burliest approach. Their sound is all stomping and intensity.

DEATH TOKEN - "4-Track Attack" EP (Even Worse)
DEATH TOKEN took me by surprise on this 7". Their songs scrape along with an agitated, noisy wall-of-sound style. These tracks are much more notable and over the top than their previous efforts. DEATH TOKEN must be out of place in K-Town having such an aggro take on hardcore but maybe that paradox is what has made them so ferocious.

ORDER - "Saru" EP (HG:Fact)
ORDER is one of the most whacked-out and original Japanese punk bands currently going and I love them for it. Each release brings forth new sounds and ideas. Something about them is reminiscent of Japanese no-wavers FRICTION, but ORDER has clearly added their own take to this style. They seem to be having fun without being jokey and annoying-a rare trait in hardcore/punk.

FY FAN - "Levande Lik" EP (Feral Ward)
FY FAN hails from Sweden and plays a style similar to what their previous countrymen have produced. Hardcore played with a bare-bones raw approach and the result sounds perfectly livid.

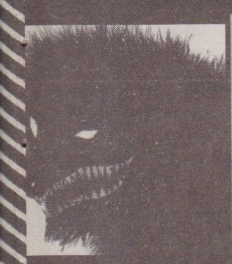
KIELTOLAKI - "Totaalisen Tuhon Huominen" EP (Moo Cow)
Everything about this record screams Finland circa 1982. Even though KIELTOLAKI is primarily dwelling in the past, the riffs on *Totaalisen Tuhon Huominen* gleam with life. These songs jump along, taking unexpected turns, which help them remain forceful and interesting.

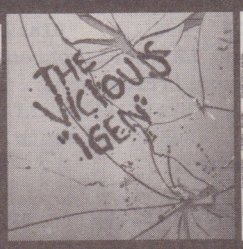
THE BAYONETTES - "We're Doomed" EP (Deranged)
I think I'm in the minority on this one, but THE BAYONETTES are my favorite current band from Toronto. OK, I'll admit that this

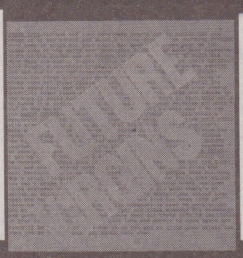
is pretty basic punk, but they've added enough subtle twists to keep these songs memorable. Some of their parts are super contagious such as the bass line in "Hungry For You." Zoe's commanding voice also helps to drive these songs along.

ECOLI - "Police Test" EP (Stress Domain)
This one seemed to come from outta nowhere. Actually I'm gonna give a shout-out to shitworker/demo reviewer E. Butterworth 'cos he was the fellow that first recommended ECOLI to us. The guitarist in this band must have some complex about being bored 'cos throughout this record he is continuously playing some fucked up noise or crazed sounding riff.

TYVEK - "Summer Burns" 2xEP (What's Your Rupture?)
I love this record but I have a hard time pinning why. It reminds me of everything I love about WIRE-lively instrumentation contrasting with subdued vocal patterns. Sometimes the simplest music is the best.







Mitch Cardwell

Merely a snippet of what moved moi. Check www.terminal-boredom.com for the full nerd-out.

EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING - LP (Dropkick), "You Let Me Be Honest With You/We'll Be Turned On" EP (White Denim), and Live
The LP technically came out in 2006, so the nine of you US residents that had a copy in that calendar year can whip me all you want. Aussie punk gets put back on the map in a big way thanks to ECSR...perfection, really. Best live band I saw all year as well.

WAX MUSEUMS - All the EPs
Texas clowns tackle drug-goof "Killed By Death" sleaze and make their own mark. Singles on Rehab, Hozac, Ken Rock, and the mighty Douche Master. Pick one and feel your brain liquefy. When "Billy's Room" hits vinyl, we'll all get boners. Ladies too!

FINAL SOLUTIONS - "Songs By Solution" LP (Goner)
Still the very best punk rock band walking the planet Earth.

THE CARBONAS - LP (Goner)
Stomps the shit out of every other release they have, including their previous LP, which I had the pleasure to release. FANTASTIC!

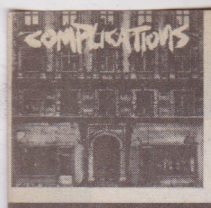
PINK REASON - "By A Thread" EP (Trickknee)
Don't think the Siltbreeze LP made it over to *MRR* for review, but it's Downerville, USA...the sound of sulk and anger. Naturally, I was pretty into it. This EP is more tuneful and, at moments, could easily be mistaken for dark pop a la the PONYS and their ilk. Trouble is there's too much smarts here to pigeonhole. Two records I spun over and over and over...

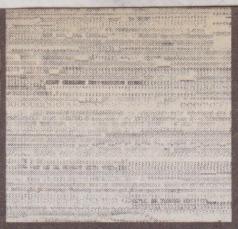
THE HEX DISPENSERS - LP (Alien Snatch)
Never expected ALEX CUERVO's new punk unit to throw me for a loop, but fuck...surprise of the year!!! Easily my most-spun release of 2007. The catchy punk that every MARKED MEN fan drools over, yet delivered with a much darker lean.

LAMPS - LP (In The Red) and "Tim Ford" EP (Hook Or Crook)
The 7" Of The Year honors typically go to either an outta-nowhere weird-punker or a painfully catchy pop exercise. Not so in 2007. The Lamps' *Tim Ford* 7" is far too powerful to ignore...the loudest and most effective use of 7" vinyl all year. Pop be damned! The LP? Oh yeah...just as killer!

FE FI FO FUMS - "I Wanna Boom Boom Girl" EP (Rob's House Records)
THE DUTCHESS AND THE DUKE - "Reservoir Park" EP (Boom Boom Of Renton)
Huh??? Budget trash punk gone (Gasp! Gulp! Puke!) folkie???? *Believe it.* Golden bliss, these are.

DEMON'S CLAW - "Satan's Little Pet Pig" LP (In The Red)
How to define? Best '80s Aussie band that's actually a French Canadian band from 2007? Might be suitable, as there is a fair chunk of the SCIENTISTS' vibe here, along with a whole slew of rootsy *Forced Exposure*-isms that were (nearly) killed dead by KBD fixation and new-wave moose costumes. Those moves, coupled with a ferocious live show and a generally, uh, robust sense o' party, makes this LP a real gem. In terms of whatever constitutes "garage rock" right now, this is the best LP of its kind since the BLACK LIPS' *Let It Bloom*, although the sonic resemblances are minimal (the drugs appear to be the same). Far better than I expected it be, which is perhaps why I'm so fond of it.





Nick Mangel

It's really hard for me to choose a top ten monthly, to say nothing of yearly. I am including here records I keep coming back to because I found them to be so good they needed repeated listening. I have been especially into the whole BOLT THROWER or blackened crust thing (I call it Bolt-beat) the last year, so obviously that weighed heavily on my standards for inclusion! This excludes cassettes and CD-Rs

1. EXTINCTION OF MANKIND - "Northern Scum" LP (PRofane Existence)
What else can you really say about these guys? They just quite simply are one of the best crust bands out there and show no signs of slowing down. Brilliant.

2. WARCOLLAPSE - "Defy!" LP (Profane Existence)
A crust band that actually evolves and has begun to do some pretty original doom/dirge stuff.

3. DISTRUST - "Discography" CD (Black Seeds)
Glad to see a discography of one of the better '90s crust/grind acts from Singapore. There were so many cool bands around back then, and these guys were damned good!

4. G.I. AND THE IDIOTS - "Discography" CD (Basement Rekordz)
Discography of a generally under-appreciated '80s Filipino HC band! Thrashin'!

5. PERTH EXPRESS - "Discography" CD (Teenage Disco Bloodbath)
Along the lines of EXTINCTION OF MANKIND and WARCOLLAPSE, but a little darker and more moody, PERTH EXPRESS was an incredibly progressive HC band that took some elements of the TRAGEDY craze and brought it to an even cooler level.

6. LIMB FROM LIMB - "Death, Famine, Plague" LP (No Options)
One of the best Bolt-beat bands out there, keeping it dark, heavy, and pummeling.

7. LEGION 666 - "Black Goat Armageddon" LP (Schizophrenic)
These guys transformed into a full-blown HELLHAMMER-influenced blackened crust behemoth right under my nose!

8. STORMCROW/SANCTUM - split LP (No Options)
One of the best crust albums to come out in years, both these guys are keeping' the Bolt-beat faith alive. Amazing cover, too.

9. AFTER THE BOMBS - "Relentless Onslaught" LP (The Total End)
Excellent, more raw and homespun blackened crust/Bolt.

10. MYTH OF PROGRESS - LP (Mundo En Kaos)
Awesome dark, anarcho crust for the better side of the Bay!

Layla Gibbon

I remember reading in someone's top ten last year that there were way less good records released that year than previously and my mind was kind of blown. So many records came out in 2006 that I was obsessed with, it was actually kind of hard to narrow it down. This year, I was the person that made the claim that there were way fewer releases I was consumed by, and Justin was the incredulous one. Anyway, here goes.

1. SEX VID - "Tania" EP (Dom America)
SEX VID is my favorite band because they make my favorite kind of music-the sound of something falling apart, maybe like the song "Explode" by VOID but played by DIE KREUZEN. Music for the doomed and indifferent. It's the sound of destruction and ruin, but it makes me feel like I am part of something because someone was able to make the sound I am partial to so effectively without sounding retro or ironic or removed. It makes me think of the dogs running at the beginning of the punk movie *Suburbia*, of latch-key kids grown up all wrong, *Pick Your King* bootlegs and aimless hanging out. It's like someone who has only ever heard *My War* and decided to start a band as a result, channeling Patty Hearst and Sharon Tate. Music for the end of time, which it turns out is the only music worth making.

2. MIKA MIKO - "666" 12" (PPM)
This band can almost do no wrong; *666* is fierce-sounding like it coulda come out on Dangerhouse or Rough Trade, and seeing them live is like a day off school 'cuz someone burned it down. They are somehow goofy and cool at once, somewhere between the ADOLESCENTS and *Ladies and Gentlemen, the Fabulous Stains.*

3. ECOLI - "Big Stupid Ape" EP (Stress Domain)
The sound of puking up in a 7-11 parking lot. It's sick rec-room hardcore in the best way, nasty kids making nasty music. Destroyed and destructive.

4. HOMOSTUPIDS - "The Intern" LP (Parts Unknown)
I was going to say one of the EPs but then I couldn't remember which one came out this year, and I didn't feel like researching the facts. LPs are all right. The 7" is the best format and anyone that disagrees is an idiot, but sometimes the LP gets it right. This one does. This band would be my favorite band if SEX VID didn't exist.

5. TOTALITÄR - "Vi Är Eliten" LP (Prank)
This is fucking raging.

6. OS ESTUDANTES - LP (Laja)
This record cost me twenty dollars, which is way, *way* more than I would normally spend on a current release, but it was one of only one hundred and had to be special-ordered from Brazil. And it was worth every dollar-just classic-sounding, snotty hardcore done in the most exciting and frantic way, so fucking catchy and just straight-up rad. I would *love* to see them play. It's not generic or tired, definitely not the sound of people trying to be something they're not, just great early SoCal style hardcore. Speaking as someone who is entirely bored of revivalist movements, I would really recommend trying to get a hold of this record by any means possible.

6. OUT WITH A BANG - "Few Beers Left" EP (Fashionable Idiots)
I liked both 7"s they put out this year. Sometimes they're frantic and retarded, sometimes they're slow like too much Robitussin on a bad day. Either way it suits me.

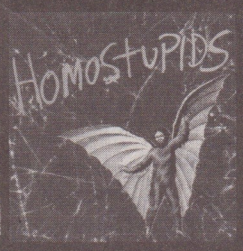
7. LEBENDEN TOTEN - "Death Culture Deprivation" 8" (Overthrow)
Though I hate that this band's shtick is putting out three limited-edition records that are only available in Kyoto, I can't help but so totally love their music. It's fucked up and brutal but not in a heavy way; it's like IKKASHINJU *Slow Down* 7" reconstituted. Check the intro!

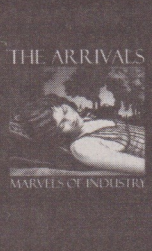
8. TYVEK - "Summer Burns" 2x7" (What's Your Rupture?)
I think this is the best thing they've put out but I am not sure. I don't really care either. Art punk in the *Messthetics* tradition...

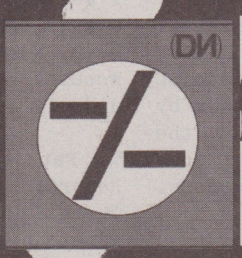
9. SKITKIDS / NIGHTMARE - split EP (HG:Fact)
It's rare that a split 7" is as equally matched as this one, but this record is straight-up raging on both sides. I had kind of written off SKITKIDS for some reason, and I am glad this 7" was around to put me right. And the NIGHTMARE side? Fuck yeah.

10. CLOCKCLEANER - "Babylon Rules" LP (Load)
It was either this or the HEY GIRL! LP and I have listened to this more, so... I didn't want to like it because it seemed like it would be performance art by Amphetamine Reptile re-enactment freaks, but then the *Frogrammer* 7" came out and glued itself to my turntable, then this did. What can you do but listen?

Contenders:
HEY GIRL! *Spill Your Guts* LP (Thrillhouse), FINALLY PUNK EP, INVASION LP (La Vida Es Un Mus), GAUZE CD, FRAMTID/SEEIN RED split EP, JAY REATARD *I Know a Place* 7" (Goner)







Ramsey Kanaan

2007 was a pretty good year, I have to say. Musicwise, at least. Loads of great tunes were issued and (even better) reissued. Way more than ten, but here's ten good reasons why we'll have something to remember, and carry us through 2008 with a song in our hearts, and the occasional fist in the air (and the odd fist in the face):

1. Captain Oi! Records
As ever, the venerable Captain Oi! is the greatest label in the world. They are rapidly building up *the* library of mandatory releases of UK (and occasionally elsewhere) punk, in all its facets. 2007, for example, saw them exhuming the complete works of DISCHARGE (well, not the complete works, but the singles, 12" EPs, and LP prior to *Grave New World*) over three CDs, the first three TOY DOLLS records (with attendant singles), the first UK SUBS, EDDIE & THE HOT RODS, and LURKERS long-players, numerous DICKIES records, *the* skinhead record of all time, the LAST RESORT's only LP, and even (gasp) a new COCK SPARRER record. Which is actually pretty good. They did a bunch more too. Bloody hell. What a label. What a project. Long live Captain Oi!

2. Overground Records
Coming a close second in the reissue stakes is Overground (also from the UK). They specialize more in the obscure, '77, and anarcho-punk end of things. All of which makes them equally wonderful, of course. Some of the notables they produced in the previous twelve months include the definitive (double-CD no less!) CRAVATS collection (more jazz/avante-garde than punk, and all the better for it), NUCLEAR SOCKETTS (one of my all time faves...they only ever had one or two 7"s out, and a Peel session, and a demo or two. The only button badge I ever purchased, ever, was a NUCLEAR SOCKETTS one!), the NAKED, and the EPILEPTICS (the band that would become FLUX OF PINK INDIANS. Personally, I reckon they were far superior to FLUX. "Tube Disasters" was an EPILEPTICS song, as was "Two Years Too Late"-ripped off by ANTI-PASTI on their first 7"!). Overground, of course, don't just do reissues either. They did the newest 999 disc, and that wasn't bad either!

3. Insurgence Records
It's definitely not a competition, but Canada's Insurgence records come a close third. They've issued some wonderful complete collections, including that of NYC's the PRESS...America's first Oi! band who actually had a brain, and founde of S.H.A.R.P. (Skinheads

Against Racial Prejudice). Then, of course, there was the *Skinhead Times* collection by the OPPRESSED, a Welsh skin band who inspired by the PRESS and founded S.H.A.R.P. in the UK. *Skinhead Times* collects all their originals from the '80s and '90s on two discs. To be honest, this actually came out in 2005, but I just got it for review in 2007! And not to be left out, Insurgence (who only release explicitly left-wing/anti-fascist/working class outfits) did a "new" record with the FALLOUT. Not skinheads, but smart as fuck pop-punks that sound like a frenetic J-CHURCH with similarly intelligent worldly and personal concerns...

4. Sudden Death Records
I'm not counting, but Joey "Shithead" Keithley's label, Sudden Death, comes a close fourth, and continues to churn out the classics. Another wonderful POINTED STICKS reissue, DOA singles collection, a reissue of DOA's *Black Spot* LP (a classic that originally disappeared into the black hole of Virgin Canada on release), and a new solo album by Mr. K himself, which, under the moniker "Band Of Rebels" is some of his finest songwriting to date. I kid you not.

5. Cherry Red Records
Not to be outdone, Cherry Red (and their punk Anagram imprint) has been busy reissuing like nobody's business...and to great effect. I was particularly pleased to see the PHOTOS finally see the light of day (again). Formed out of the ashes of SATAN'S RATS, they had that BLONDIE pop thing down real good. For the gothically inclined, Cherry Red released a RED LORRY YELLOW LORRY greatest hits (which is actually pretty great, if you dig the SISTERS OF MERCY), the second SEX GANG CHILDREN LP (most notable for a rather superb POISON GIRLS cover, even if it is uncredited!), and the CHAOS UK EPs collection, which is, unsurprisingly, their earliest, and bestest stuff...

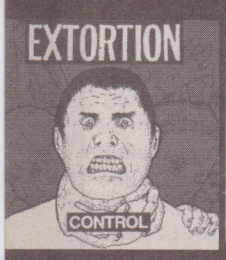
6. Folk (Punk)
Folk music, at least various versions, finally seems to be getting the OK in *MRR*. And it's about time. FILTHY THEIVING BASTARDS chucked out their fourth effort, *I'm A Son Of A Gun*, and it's superb. CHUMBAWAMBA's current folk incarnation came out with a wonderful live LP *Get On With It*, while, not to be outdone, former lead singer DANBERT NOBACON released his own anti-imperialist pirate folk opus, recruiting a MEKON or two to help him on *The Library Book Of The World*. Upstart folk label Appleseed released a stupendous double-CD of "real" (like Pete Seeger and stuff!) folk music, celebrating their ten years, and German folk-punkers AHEAD TO THE SEE released *Treffer Versenkt*, some of the best stuff I've heard this side of FAIRPORT CONVENTION. Don't be fooled, however, by Fearless' *Punk Goes Acoustic* compilations. They are dismal, dreadful, and atrocious.

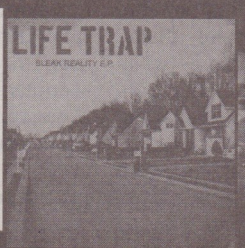
7. Fat Wreck Chords / Red Scare Records / No Idea Records
There are of course, certain labels one can always rely on. Fat Wreck Chords put out the latest masterpiece from NOFX, their second live LP, and it's brilliant. The FLATLINERS released their second full-length, and I have to say, I was partial to the latest STRUNG OUT effort. Probably not too popular in these two pages, but you can't really go wrong with twin guitars... Red Scare is, consistently, the best label for new music out there. The METHADONES are not so new, but their fifth effort, *This Won't Hurt*, is as good as any. TEENAGE BOTTLEROCKETS remind us of all that is good about pop-punk. The FALCON didn't put out a new record, but at least I saw 'em play twice, and their *Unicornography* would be the best record of 2007, if it hadn't been the best record of 2006. Lance, of J-CHURCH, tragically passed last year, but not before No Idea released his last full length. A truly great release, and not just in hindsight.

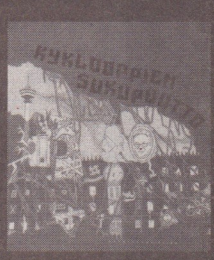
8. THE SUBHUMANS - "Internal Riot" LP (Bluurg)
Venerable old wankers who still rock live, and actually did a new record (and didn't license it to anyone) are the UK SUBHUMANS! Check out *Internal Riot* on their own Bluurg label. Fifteen new tunes that won't disappoint.

9. New Music
I actually did like some honest-to-goodness new music, believe it or not. LA PLEBE's debut *Hasta La Muerte* (on Red Scare, of course!) is a brilliant collection of bilingual barrio punk with horns. WHAT REMAINS, from Alaska, produced an incredible quirky fusion of JAWBREAKER and HÜSKER DÜ (enchantmentunderthestars.blogspot.com), and dare I say it, I even dug the *MRR* comp (uh, that might have come out in '06)! Well, lots of it was new music to me, anyways!

10. DYNAMITE8 - "The Medicine" LP
I was out on a date. Didn't go so well. I turned up fashionably late to the show, to see the REAL MACKENZIES. Fortunately, the show started even fashionably later. So I got to witness the first band, DYNAMITE8. Bloody hell. Blew me away. Three guitars (plus a bass), lots of dueling guitar solos, melody, drive, great aggressive, melodic, female vocals. Made up for the not-so-hot date. So much so that I even bought their full-length. It's called *The Medicine*. Best record of 2007. Certainly the most played. So there.







Carolyn Keddy

I have a love/hate relationship with year-end Top Ten lists. I hate reading them and I love complaining about them. I really enjoy when I haven't heard one record on someone's list. Yeah, those must have been great records. No one ever seems to get it right anyway. Except me, of course. Here are the Top 10 records of 2007.

EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING - "You Let Me Be Honest With You/We'll Be Turned On" (White Denim)
I can't say it enough, I *love* EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING. I am so happy to still have some old-school-type friends who call me on the telephone to tell me a great band is playing at a club I don't usually go to, opening for bands I never see. 'Cos if I didn't, I would have missed EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING and that would have been devastating. This 7" is just one sampling of ECSR's greatness. Two revved-up punk rock tunes that sound very first-wave. Not like the band is imitating, but that the music has seeped into their beings and has come out in a new and exciting, but familiar way. While other bands are going for more noise and extra levels of distortion, it is extra nice to have a band with no need to cover up the songs. The songs are just too good!

HEAD - "Spend The Night Alone/Killed By Death" (Goner)
Side A is a decent cover of semi-obscure English new wave band the FATAL CHARMS. But it is side B that makes this one of the best records of the year. The song is absolutely fantastic. It is short, concise, and very catchy. The lyrics are amazing and hysterically funny: "When it came out we couldn't give the things away / But now it sells for $500 / The only records you buy are on eBay / Just buy some records, I'll send my kids through college / Don't put your records out 'cos no one's gonna care when a record's only good because it's rare." The record collector mentality has so permeated the present punk scene that new bands put out records in such small editions that before you can even try to buy one, they are sold out and selling on eBay for ridiculous prices. Wasn't punk supposed to rebel against this kind of shit? Thanks to HEAD for summing up my feelings perfectly and making them into a very catchy, very cool song. You've been killed by death.

CHEATER SLICKS - "Walk Into The Sea" LP (Dead Canary)
20 years and still going strong, the CHEATER SLICKS are a band after my own heart. Their music has remained consistent throughout the many musical fads of the last decades. It is rare to find a band that sticks to their sound, yet manages to always release an album of great new songs. CHEATER SLICKS do it. I was afraid they had finally thrown in the towel in 2002 with *Yer Last Record*, but I am so happy to see they have resurfaced with another great album. The two-guitar assault with the pounding drum emphasis makes them one of the most exciting bands ever. Every day my favorite song changes, but right now it is "Crackin' Up." The desperation in the vocals is what gets me. When it comes on the stereo I just stop what I am doing to listen to it. Absolutely fantastic! A bonus with this album is the free MP3s of every song. Why every band doesn't do that? It makes no sense to me.

MARY WEISS - "Dangerous Game" LP (Norton)
The former lead singer of the SHANGRI-LAS, MARY WEISS, released her first record in over 30 years. Impressively, she didn't go the traditional oldies route. She hooked up with Greg Cartwright who produced, wrote songs, and backed her up with his band the REIGNING SOUND. Norton Records head Billy Miller, the DICTATORS' Andy Shernoff, REAL KIDS' John Felice, among others, wrote some of the other songs. The result is an amazing collection of garage songs with a tough-girl sensibility. MARY WEISS makes every song her own. Even the ones originally recorded by the REIGNING SOUND seem like they were written for her.

SONIC CHICKEN 4 - LP (In The Red)
The singer of SONIC CHICKEN 4 sounds kind of like a demented Lou Reed. I of course mean that in the best way possible. The music is an odd combination of garage and new wave. The songs are simple, but very catchy. Combine all of those elements and you get one great record, unlike anything else around. The LP includes a free CD. Too cool.

THE COATHANGERS - LP (Rob's House)
Most people tell me they like the music on this record, but the vocals turn them off. I love the vocals. Screeching female singers with a lot of anger, but in a fun way. They have a good sense of humor. The music is simple, punchy punk with keyboards. My favorite track, "Haterade," is an amazing, catchy song that screams (literally) of hate. There is a danceable sing-a-long anthem called "Shut The Fuck Up." Plus, any band that writes a song about how misunderstood Tonya Harding is is OK with me. And that's only the first side of this great record.

THE VATICANS - "Guardia Svizzera Pontificia" CD (Pure Filth)
One of the great musical tragedies of 2007 was the break up of San Francisco's the VATICANS. They're one of my favorite bands. At least they put out this record before doing so. A collection of excellent girl-group style garage songs. Timeless pop songs that get better with every listen. There are some fast ones, some slow ones and an excellent cover of the SHANGRI-LAS' "Out In the Streets."

COCONUT COOLOUTS - "The Spin Around/ Swim Spin Swim" 7" (Heads Up)
Two extremely catchy and fun songs. Punked-out garage that makes even the lamest person dance. COCONUT COOLOUTS were also one of my favorite live bands of 2007. Two stand-up drummers in front, with two guitarists and a bassist dressed like banana. Too much fun!

NEON NAZIS - "Problems/ Fangs" (Going Underground)
Probably the noisiest record in my top ten. What has happened to me? Messy, trashy, and fast with a nasally lead singer. Yet, the songs end up sounding very catchy. NEON NAZIS are the bastard children of CRIME. I have no idea what they are singing about, but I don't care. I am singing along anyway.

TYVEK - "Summer Burns" 2x7" (What's Your Rupture?)
Post-punk the way it was done back in the '70s. Urgency, guitars, and really great songs. When I saw TYVEK live, I had to have the song "Give It Up," which happened to be on this 2x7". Ever since that purchase, I have had to buy everything they put out. What a great band.

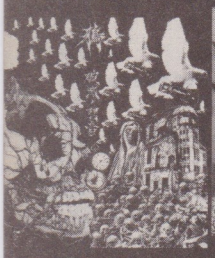
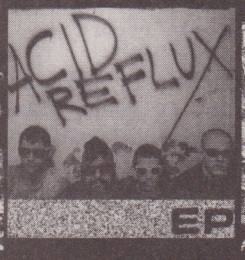
THE SKI INSTRUCTORS "Kids On The Street/ Horoscope" (Dulc-I-Tone)
One of those ridiculously limited edition 7"s that really piss me off these days. I was torn between putting this on my list since it may be hard to find by the time this comes out, or leaving it off. But this record is just too good. Very catchy songs from ex-members of N.A.R., PRETTY GIRLS, FM KNIVES, LOS HUEVOS, and many other Sacramento bands. Two perfect pop songs.

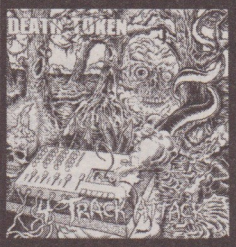
The Jailbirds - "Going To Stab the Killer Gang!!" LP (Repent)
Over the top rock 'n' roll the way only the Japanese can do it. The music is crazy, loud, overblown, and raucous: everything I want in a band. They put on a great live show too.

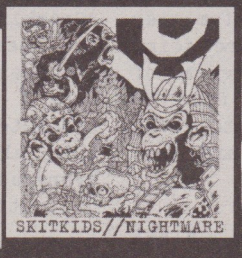
Honorable Mentions (I can never just pick ten!):
CRIME *Exalted Masters* **LP** (Crime Music), THEE DOUBLE D'S *Dillybar /Groce Out* (self-released), WOODEN SHJIPS **LP** (Holy Mountain), **LAMPS LP** (In The Red), MIKA MIKO *666* 12" (PPM), BOSTIN CHINKS Coltrane EP (Goner), BUSY SIGNALS **LP** (Dirtnap), OSCARS *Jump For Joy* EP (Goner), PETS *Let's Go/I Want Fun* 7" (Douche Master), FLIPTOPS / YOKOHAMA HOOKS split EP (Iron Goat)

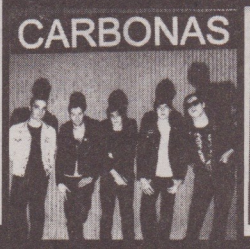
Reissues:
JOHNNY MOPED *The Bootleg Tapes Vol. 1 and 2* 2xLP (Damaged Goods), THE EAT *It's Not The Eat, It's The Humidity* 2xLP (Alternative Tentacles)-all these unreleased tracks! Yay! THE GITS *Frenching The Bully* and *Enter...The Conquering Chicken* LPs (Broken Rekids)-back on vinyl where they belong. THE BAGS *All Bagged Up* **LP** (Artifix)-all their recordings, plus live, demos and outtakes. Hurray! HEART ATTACK *God Is Dead* EP (Broken Rekids)

Best Surprise of 2007:
WRECKLESS ERIC with AMY RIGBY live at Thee Parkside, San Francisco. I wasn't expecting much, knowing his reputation for not wanting to play old songs. His new songs were pretty good and the audience was so into his performance that he gave us a few older songs and finally gave in to audience demand by doing "Take the Cash (K.A.S.H.)" and "Whole Wide World."







Mike Howes

GRAF ORLOCK - "Destination Time Tomorrow" CDEP (Level-Plane)
What do you wanna hear, man? Do you wanna hear that sometimes I think about eatin' a bullet? Well I do! I do! I even got a special bullet for the occasion, with a hallow point, look! Make sure it blows the back of my goddamn head out, do the job right. Is that a real gun? Yea yes, it's a real gun. Do you kill people? Well, you see, this is the problem with terrorists. They're really inconsiderate when it comes to people's schedules.

INSECT WARFARE - "World Extermination" CD (RSR/625 Thrash)
One of the best bands I saw live this year and this release captures that energy. Grind your fucking head in.

MAGRUDERGRIND - "Rehashed" CD (Six Weeks)
A great combination of power violence, grindcore, and fast hardcore.

YACÖPSAE - "Tanz. Grosny. Tanz..." CD (Obscene)
Fast! Bordering on chaos and noise. The way we love it. It happens in all forms of music, those bands whose music seems to be right on the edge of falling apart, collapsing in a chaotic mess-but it never does, and the bands remain in control and on the edge. I love that sound and YACÖPSAE are one of those who stand on the cliff, peering at chaos. Hard to believe this they've been going for fifteen years.

DESTRUCTION'S END / BANDANOS - "Thrash from the Dead" CD (625 Thrash/Delinquent/Positive Damage/No Class)
The thrash revival really can't be called a revival anymore. It's been going on for ten years or so (when did those first WHN? releases come out, '97? '98?) and if something has been going on for that long, it's a movement or just part of the norm. With the hundreds of thrash releases in 2007, this is my favorite. California and São Paulo, Brazil join forces on this split.

FALL OF EFRAFA - "Elil" CD (Halo of Flies)
This band and CD was the biggest surprise and discovery I made reviewing at *MRR* this past year. I had never heard of the band and this CD blew me away. *Elil* is the second release of a trilogy based somewhat on a book by Richard Adams. Anarchist leanings made by vegan atheists that end up sounding like post-hardcore, emo, and/or pummeling hardcore. Much of this is beautiful sounding but there is plenty of rage.

INFANTICIDE - "Extinction Scheme" CD (Emetic)
Intense Swedish grindcore. This very well might be my favorite type of music. Think NASUM, SAYYADINA, CYNESS, etc. 23 tracks in 29 minutes.

IRON LUNG - "Sexless//No Sex" CD (Prank)
What is IRON LUNG? Powerviolence and grindcore and thrash and hardcore and slow, heavy riffs and bursts of speed and, well, a duo.

SAYYADINA - "Mourning the Unknown" CD (Sound Pollution)
It's hard not to compare SAYYADINA to NASUM, and one of SAYYADINA's members once played bass for NASUM. The thing about SAYYADINA that sets them apart is that they make brutal Swedish grindcore but their songs are also catchy.

AFGRUND - "Svarta Dagar" CD (Lifestage)
More Swedish grind but this time with crust leanings.

Golnar Nikpour

This year, I didn't get to hear every single piece of punk vinyl that came out for the first time in a few years, but I still had a hard time choosing my top ten records. So instead I chose my top eleven. It was still a nearly impossible task! I could write more of an introduction, but really this whole thing should just serve as an introduction to your running out and getting every one of the below mentioned...

SEX VID - "Tania" EP (Dom America)
SEX VID (both live and on record) is the exact sound of the near-deafening static that my head and heart has always produced as a way of dealing with the alienation/frustration of living in this cold and fucked up world. And save your hating, 'cuz I don't care if I've already over-hyped 'em-I've been waiting my whole life for a band to move me this much, and I worship the riff in the title track of this EP more than I care about any of you assholes anyway.

INVASION - LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
Dark and claustrophobic sounds dominate the best long-player of the year (well, from a new band at least) from Barcelona's INVASION, who sound like the perfect update on the strange (but still vicious) echo on those old KURO records and the unreal vocals of all the best old Italian bands. In a few years I think that people will be scrambling to catch up with Barcelona's current scene, and at this point I am willing to give up a kidney, an eyeball, or my own dear mother not to miss anything by this band or their friends OTAN, INFIERNO DE COBARDES, FIRMEZA 10, etc.

GAUZE - 5th CD (XXX)
OMG OMG OMG!!!! New GAUZE! And it's different than their other stuff but still *so totally fucking GAUZE!* Is that first song a *pop* song?! I hear that with some people the jury on this CD is still out, but like, *whateverzzzzz* this shit made me break my years-old "never buy a hardcore CD" rule and pogo around my room crazy teenage girl style more than any other release of the year. And this from a bunch of grumpy-ass old Japanese men who have been punk longer than I've been alive. Amazing.

LEBENDEN TOTEN - "Death Culture Deprivation" 8" (Overthrow)
Maybe I should just cut and paste other reviews of this band's music and pass it off as my own ("ear-bleeding face-shattering fucked up noize not music argghhhhh!!!!") but that would be lazy (and D-U-L-L), so I will also add that the riff from the first song on this 8" makes me totally *headbang* and that the execution on this record-their best-is so precise as to practically resemble a piece of fine fucking art.

CONDENADA - EP (Lengua Armada)
I went on tour with these Chicagoan ladies in the spring of this year and they blew me away night after night after night with their totally passionate and intense performances, not to mention their rocking and memorable songs. They are truly a moving experience to behold, though they are kind of hard to describe in the short space allotted to me here. Like THE GITS meets a homo BORN AGAINST? I dunno, but I do know that I'm down for life.

TOTALITÄR - "Vi Är Eliten" LP (Prank)
Hudiksvall, Sweden's TOTALITÄR is absolutely unfuckwithable. After twenty years of existence (including a couple of years of "retirement"), they somehow put out their best full-length record yet in 2007. And despite the goofy art (are those smiling skeletons riding a skull roller-coaster in hell?!? *WHY*?!), the sounds contained on the grooves of this LP are the very definition of raging HC/punk. Utter perfection.

GENTLEMEN JESSE & HIS MEN - "I Don't Wanna Know" EP (Douchemaster)
Who can argue with a perfect pop song? How about three perfect pop songs? Right.

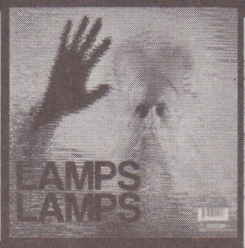
CLOCKCLEANER - "Frogrammer" EP (Parts Unknown/Richie)
I know that CLOCKCLEANER's LP is probably the record of theirs that people are currently talking about, and the title track from this 7" is a cover of some ultra-obscure German punk band that I've never heard of, and that this record doesn't even really sound like CLOCKCLEANER. But fuck, "Frogrammer" is the Single of the Year to me, a catchy BIRTHDAY PARTY-esque jam that went on all of my "summer '07" mix-tapes and will likely make it onto all of the tapes I make to commemorate "summer '08."

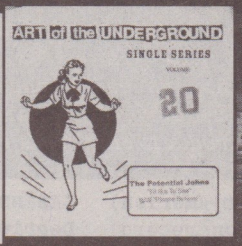
MIKA MIKO - "666" 12" (PPM)
The most straight-up *punk* sounding record on my list I think, and I don't care what the naysayers say, 'cuz-to quote the MINUTEMEN-this band is Bob Dylan to me, or maybe more accurately, this band is the MINUTEMEN to me, or RED CROSS, or BLACK FLAG, or whatever first wave band you worship too hard to be bothered to notice the most wildly exciting band on the planet right under your nose in the here and now. Ladies and Gentlemen, the Fabulous Mika Miko...

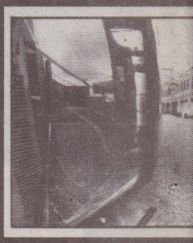
NODZZZ - "I Don't Wanna (Smoke Marijuana)/We Are the Only Animals" (Make a Mess)
Charming, weirdo outsider (punk) pop from these Californian sweethearts. I have a feeling that, much like the first TYVEK single from last year, this is a record I am going to be grateful as hell to have picked up the first time around. Don't sleep on this (insert bad pun with the word "Nodzzz" here).

RED HERRING - both EPs (Mississippi)
Do you like the DOG FACED HERMANS? Well, this band (featuring the instantly recognizable vocals of Dyanne of HARUM SCARUM fame) reminds of the DOG FACED HERMANS. When I first heard that they featured a banjo and tuba, I was skeptical, but these songs are catchy and inspiring, and I am confirmed in thinking that Dyanne is one of the best vocalists in punk.

Also:
YOUNG OFFENDERS *Situations* EP, NEW BLOODS EP, SURRENDER *Last White Flag* EP, INFIERNO DE COBARDES *Ciudad Monstruosa* EP, KNUGEN FALLER- *Lugna Favoriter* LP, JUMP OFF A BUILDING *Bird-Watching in New Zealand* EP (Lengua Armada), SILLA ELECTRICA demo, LA FRACTION *La Vie Revée* LP (Feral Ward), TYVEK *Summer Burns* 2xEP (What's Your Rupture?)







KAY LUJAN

1. THE JENNIFER ECHO - "Be Dangerous On Rock Guitar" CD (Jumping Juniper)
From the ashes of the under-appreciated BEN GREM, this power pop post group nails it on this EP.

2. ZATOPEKS - "Damn Fool Music" CD (Household Name)
From the UK, the perfect blend of melodic punk circa 1989 and indie pop.

3. THE UNLOVABLES - "Heartsickle" CD (Whoa Oh)
The second full-length from these bubblegum pop punkers from New York that picks up where the last one left off.

4. THE RATCHETS - "Glory Bound" CD (Pirates Press)
A great blend of old school punk rock and roll and roots rock from the East Coast.

5. BROADWAY CALLS - CD (Smallman)
Young pop punk from Oregon with the melodies and energy to shoot these guys to top of the pop punk heap.

6. THE MEASURE (SA) - "Historical Fiction" CD (Team Science)
A great mix of country drawl and loose, jangly up-tempo punk.

7. BACKSEAT VIRGINS - "Born Again" CD (Insubordination)
Pop punk with a gal singer with the charm of UK fuzzpop bands circa 1986.

8. THE INDECISION ALARM - CD (Tic Tac Totally)
Still no new PROPAGHANDI on the horizon? This melodic hardcore release will hold you over just fine.

9. ONLY CRIME - "Virulence" CD (Fat Wreck)
BLACK FLAG is long gone. The DESCENDENTS? Who really knows? For something in between, check out this supergroup of sorts.

10. STOLEN BIKES RIDE FASTER - "Nothing Has Changed" CD (Document)
From Italy, a band that sounds nothing like SCREECHING WEASEL or the CLASH. A hyper DILLENGER FOUR with emo stylings and the melodic rawness of early HÜSKER DÜ.

TIM BROOKS

Year-end top ten's are a funny beast...lots of pressure to dig out the absolute ten best bangers of the year. As with the past couple there aren't as many records being put out that I think will be hitting the turntable in decades to come, but those that will are class. Now, eyebrows may be raised for some of my choices, but some records didn't make the cut even though on paper they are ragers-my criteria is purely amount of time on the record deck, so if the record hit me where it hurts then it's in, even if it's just 'cos I know people in the bands or it reminds me of times past. You can do no wrong picking up any (or all) of these...in no particular order...

STATUES - "People Make Me Nervous" 12" (Radio 81)
I make no excuses for my ongoing love affair with powerpop, and STATUES takes the best elements of bands like the BOYS and mixes it with the sharper guitars of the TRANZMITORS, an angular WIRE edge, and, dare I say it, a GREEN DAY pop flavor. Absolutely battered this record last year...

POTENTIAL JOHNS / CHINESE TELEPHONES - split LP (Cheeky Git)
All hail Floyd for putting this monster out. I'm sure the CHINESE TELEPHONES rule, but I can't make it past the POTENTIAL JOHNS side. Jeff from the MARKED MEN's side project, who have been recording shit for a decade or so. The guy is a songwriting genius... With hooks galore, it has elements of the MARKED MEN but is a little more varied. Total sleeper band; check them out. Rip live too.

HARD SKIN - "We Are The Wankers" EP (Feral Ward)
I guess this technically came out in '06, but domestic wasn't til '07, so it's in. Genius. The record every punk/skin band wished they'd made.

CROW - "Hametsu No Haoto" 12" (Crow)
Not as good as the LP of the previous year, but devastating Japanese hardcore at its best.

WAR ALL THE TIME / WHOLE IN THE HEAD - split EP (Crime Scene)
As a rule, I hate split hardcore EPs...but I *love* this shit. WHOLE IN THE HEAD (despite the shitty name) are one of my fave new bands- blitzkrieg fast hardcore, like a mix of SS DECONTROL and EXTREME NOISE TERROR... aaaahhrr-rrggghhh ...UK South Coast represent. WAR ALL THE TIME makes it as part of my crusade to get Sned in every year's top ten. Punishing UK core, reminiscent of the bands from the '90s like SUFFER and all the shows I grew up on in the north of England. Class.

LIFE TRAP - "Bleak Reality" EP (No Way)
I think No Way is the premier hardcore label around right now. I could have put any number of their releases of the past year in here, but for some reason, this is the one I listened to the most. Out of control hardcore from the ARTICLES OF FAITH/Midwest school....

VIOLENT ARREST - 12" (Deranged)
RIPCORD are one of my all time favorite bands. I idolized them as a kid, got to see them back in the day, and still listen to them now. I liked DUMBSTRUCK a lot, but this band featuring three-fourths of RIPCORD fucking *destroy.* With riffs masterfully lifted off Boston hardcore records, this could almost be a lost RIPCORD recording...

TRANZMITORS - "We Are All Alone With You/Between Planets" (Seeing Eye)
Big fan of this band. I've heard bleating about them becoming too poppy...fuck that, this shit rules. I love the new LP but the 7" format suits them better-exactly how powerpop should sound...catchy, but with balls and an amazing JESUS AND MARY CHAIN cover on the flip.

JAY REATARD - "Night Of Broken Glass" 12" (In The Red)
Now that Sir REATARD has been co-opted by hipsters, as witnessed by anyone at his latest San Francisco show (it was all stripy shirts, drunk girls with '80s hairdos, and dudes with ironic moustaches and old man hats), our time with him is nearly through. Anyway, the dude still churns out super catchy shit, and the last 12" was no exception. A little more tweaked than the LP, still dig it though.

LOSER LIFE - "I Want The World" EP (Life's a Rape)
My mate Allan talked these up a storm, but I ignored him 'cos his taste is suspect at best. However, in this case the wee Scots fella was on the money! This band is firing. They seem to run more in the DIY circles and and so have not been lauded by the hardcore kids (more fool them), although they could very well sit in amongst your No Way/Grave Mistake records. Kinda HÜSKER DÜ/ARTICLES OF FAITH with a ton of noise and charm...missed 'em when they came through, more fool me.

I don't usually do a could-have-but-didn't list, but this time I will. I loved all these records too: TOTALITÄR *Vi Är Eliten* LP (Prank), AUTISTIC YOUTH 7" (Black Water), GIANT HAYSTACKS 7" (Art of the Underground), WASTED TIME *No Shore* EP (Grave Mistake), HIGH TENSION WIRES *Midnight Cashier* LP, REPERCUSSIONS *Eleven Songs* 12" (540), ONLY FUMES AND CORPSES CD, CROSSED EYES EP (Sorry State), SPECTRES 7" (Whisper in Darkness), FY FAN EP (Feral Ward), HEX DISPENSERS LP, etc.

Marissa Magic

10. THE NEW FLESH - "Vessel" LP (Human Conduct)
Grungy, noisy, makes me think of the '90s.

9. PINK REASON - "Cleaning the Mirror" LP (Siltbreeze)
I'm a sucker for super noisy garage rock that sounds like it was recorded on a boom box amidst self destruction. This is it.

8. LOS LLAMARADA - "Exploding Now!" LP (S-S)
I read about this and bought it. Sounds like MAGIK MARKERS would sound like if they had grown up listening to '60s garage rock rather than '90s hardcore.

7. SEX VID - "Tania" EP (Dom America)
I saw them in a pizza place after hours and my mind was blown.

6. MIKA MIKO - "666" 12" (PPM)
Come on, it's MIKA MIKO! How can you go wrong? All girls, clattering fun time punk, screechy singing, *yes!*

5. SISTERS - "Everybody..." CD (self-released)
They are so ripping off SONIC YOUTH and I love it so much. Plus their drummer is this really awesome lady that helmed the second Ladyfest in Olympia.

4. BAD NEWS BATS - CD (Badmaster)
Thanks Layla for giving this to me! Shitty, fuzzed-out recording, herky-jerkiness, a bunch of girls screaming, everything I ever wanted!

3. MUTATORS - "Paper Words" EP (The Broadway to Boundary)
These Canadians played in my basement once with a different lead singer and it was alright, but this is the first release with the new singer, and she is so awesome! Gnarly screamer.

2. HEY GIRL! - "Spill Your Guts" LP (Thrillhouse)
I had heard these girls were really good and then I saw their last show in the basement at Thrillhouse, which was super fun. So I went and got the record and it didn't leave my turntable for a month. Sloppy teenage girl punk at its best.

1. SOFT SHOULDER - "Hit Single" 7" (Gilgongo)
MRR gave this to me to review and I got fully obsessed with the first song on it-no-wave, grunge, and noise all rolled into one.
Top Full-Lengths

Jonathan Floyd

TRANZMITORS - LP (Deranged)
This '70s powerpop-influenced band has ruled my turntable for the past year with their 7"s. At first, upon listening to this LP I thought I might be disappointed. I wasn't. A kick-ass long-player that has been in constant rotation in my apartment since it came out. I bet my neighbors are sick of it.

UNDERGROUND RAILROAD TO CANDYLAND - "Birds Rough" LP (Recess)
Combining surf and the Recess Records-style sound, UNDERGROUND RAILROAD TO CANDYLAND may have snuck in and released the record of the year. The final tracks, "Body Of The Bird" and "Paint Thin Walls," might be the top ending combo of the millennium.

COPYRIGHTS - "Make Sound" CD (Red Scare)
COPYRIGHTS, perhaps the current cream of the pop punk set, deliver another gem. At first I didn't think *Make Sound* had the kick of their *Mutiny Pop* debut LP, but upon further listens it may be even better. 'Course the one thing it lacks is a vinyl version!

EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING - LP (Dropkick)
Fucking brilliant update of the classic Australian sound. Borrowing from the past, but adding to the future, this record rules. Plus, the singer dons black gloves before they play.

CLOCKCLEANER - "Babylon Rules" LP (Load)
My coworkers laughed when I said this is the perfect hate-fucking record. But if you know hate-fucking, this is the record for you.

ARRIVALS - "Marvels of the Industry" LP (Recess)
Simply brilliant. Every time I play this melodic Chicago masterpiece, I hear something new. The Southside's best band since NAKED RAYGUN.

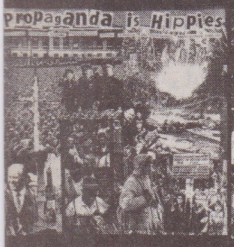
RADON - "Metric Loads of Buttrock" LP (No Idea)
The lyrics "I haven't been hungover / Because I haven't been sober" just speak to me. Of course, I had been waiting for this record since it was announced that RADON was recording again, and it didn't disappoint.

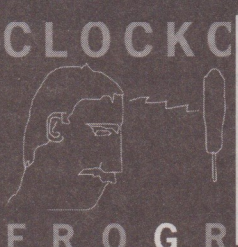
MARY WEISS - "Dangerous Game" LP (Norton)
Greg Cartwright songwriting, Mary Weiss vocals...how could you go wrong? Some might say this isn't a punk record, but it got reviewed in here and it is definitely one of the year's best records.

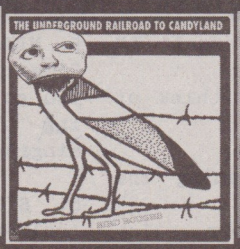
LA FRACTION - "La Vie Revée" LP (Feral Ward)
Golnar referred to this record as something along the lines as the perfect record to kick off the summer. Well, for once, a Mets fan was right, as this female-fronted political punk band ruled it for me during another depressing baseball season.

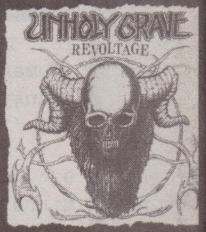
HIGH TENSION WIRES - "Midnight Cashier" LP (Dirtnap)
Austin and Denton team up to give us another great hook-filled punk record.

Top Five EPs:
YOUNG OFFENDERS *Situations* **EP (Parts Unknown)**
HARD SKIN *We Are The Wankers* **EP (Feral Ward)**
FUTURE VIRGINS *Gravity* **EP**
BAYONETTES *We're Doomed* **(Deranged)**
ERGS/GRABASS CHARLESTONS split EP









Steve Spinali

COCK SPARRER - "Here We Stand" LP (TKO)
Their first LP was incomparable '77-style punk; their latest LP is a return to form, with the most mature punk of the year, and absolutely searing, stop to finish.

DEATH TOKEN - "4-Track Attack" EP (Even Worse)
DEATH TOKEN's terse, twisting HC can be mesmerizing-an ultra-tight style that's genetically incapable of letting up.

NIKKI SUDDEN - "The Truth Doesn't Matter" LP (Secretly Canadian)
Refreshing, varied, and unique post-punk, and all the more tragic that this is his last.

NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE - "Mindless Violence" EP (Even Worse)
This Half Moon Bay HC outfit is a winner for great songs and smart lyrics-the tunes even have a touch of DC.

GING NANG BOYS - "I Don't Wanna Die"
Frankly, these Japanese veterans can produce messy, inarticulate punk, but their video is classic-a cavalcade of boners and teen sex.

IDIOTS RULE - "Ticking Timebomb" EP (Hate)
Rich, growling punk with an engrossing production-it works on all levels (well, except maybe originality).

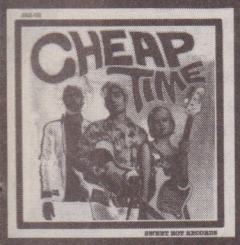
SEX PISTOLS - "I Swear I Was There" LP (bootleg)
This vintage performance captures the band at a gig that changed pop music history. I wasn't there, but I wish had been so I could brag.

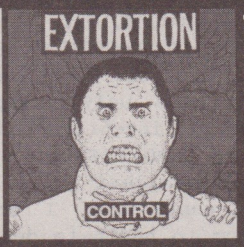
TRANZMITORS - "We're All Alone With You/Between Planets" (Seeing Eye)
This Vancouver powerpop echoes the

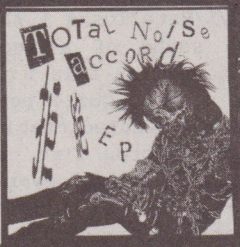
revered POINTED STICKS, and the tunes are assisted by irresistible production. The UNDERTONES would be proud.

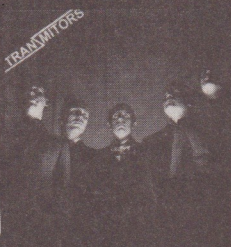
TYVEK - "Summer Burns" 2x7" (What's Your Rupture?)
No fat on these tracks. This HC leaves you with a mild high, with close to a rockin' SoCal flavor.

VICIOUS - "Alienated" LP (Feral Ward)
Some of the tunes echo classic US punk circa 1978/'79. This record has been near the very top of my favorite list for a while.









Justin Briggs

I think this may be the first year that I can honestly say I listened to more current records (and on a regular basis) than I did old classics. In a year that saw many clones and records that, arguably, should have never been released to begin with, there really were a lot of truly inspired bangers and many that were not afraid to do something original. Here are the ones with staying power, in no particular order…

EPs:

NIGHTMARE / SKITKIDS - split EP (HG:Fact)
The SKITKIDS tracks on this are pure, ripping Swedish hardcore perfection with some truly killer and appropriate guitar solos/leads. The NIGHTMARE side isn't very far behind on intensity and shred-factor either. There is no doubt in my mind that this beast is probably one of the five best split 7"s of all time.

LEBENDEN TOTEN - "Death Culture Deprivation" 8" (Overthrow)
The intro riff that carries into the first track and ends the record really sets an awesome tone. I love the noise. I love LEBENDEN TOTEN and this record is their finest hour.

ECOLI - "Big Stupid Ape" EP (Stress Domain)
The debut from this South Bay band was the surprise of the year for me. Quick and to-the-point hardcore with really cool and interesting guitar leads. What I find most intriguing about this platter is the way that the guitars and drums sound as though they are on the wrong speed. Maybe they are, who knows? Whatever the case, it works and creates a really original take on the finer points of classic American hardcore. Love it!

DEATH TOKEN - "4-Track Attack" EP (Even Worse)
From the moment it showed up in the mail I've been jamming this ripper of a 7". I can't help but liken it to the sheer madness of FRAMTID in its simple, pounding, blown-the-fuck-out rage.

LOSER LIFE - "I Want the World" EP (Life's A Rape)
I got to see LOSER LIFE play twice this in this last year and damn are they a great live band. Nice short sets that leave you wanting more, and while their *I Have Ghosts...* LP was an incredible record, it somewhat lacked the power that this band can display. This 7" on the other hand, has got it and is also so damn short that I'm left fiending for more. These guys can't seem to shake the ARTICLES OF FAITH comparison and while it is valid (especially on this record), it's really not fair. The amount of creativity in the riffs and their playing abilities keep LOSER LIFE fresh.

WASTED TIME - "No Shore" EP (Grave Mistake)
As I stated in my review of this 7" earlier in the year, this is *the* sickest of the innumerable slew of early-'80s US-influenced hardcore records to come about in the last couple years. The anger and energy flow so naturally out of the grooves, it's insanity. Definitely my favorite 7" of the year-fucking beastly!

THE VICIOUS - "Igen" EP (Feral Ward)
Their LP completely ruled and there's really no denying that it was probably a more solid effort throughout, but the B-side track of this 7", "Crucifying Me," might be my favorite of the year. After nearly a hundred listens, the song still gives me chills. Its dark and catchy guitar lines and haunting vocals in the verses are perfect in every way.

TOTAL NOISE ACCORD - EP (Crust War)
Martin thinks that underneath all the layers of noise on this record, they don't have the chops. Well, I think he's full of shit. The riffs are there, man. This record is a screaming, mad blur of noisy Japanese hardcore. I suggest side B first.

GOVERNMENT WARNING - "Arrested" EP (Grave Mistake)
This one took a minute for me to warm up to because for some reason at first I thought it sounded too produced. Ha! Boy, was I wrong. This shit is jammin' F.U.'S-styled snotty hardcore and the catchy-as-hell title track is another high point of hardcore punk in 2007.

CLOCKCLEANER - "Frogrammer/Early Man" (Richie/Parts Unknown)
Much like the VICIOUS, I'd really like to put CLOCKCLEANER's LP, "Babylon Rules," in this list, but I'm gonna limit myself to one record per band, and this has to be the one. This oddity spent more time in the first half of the year on my turntable than anything

else. And while the real gem here is A) a cover, and B) quite a deviation from CLOCKLEANER's usual Yow-with-a-goth twist, it's brilliant nonetheless.

Full(er)-lengths:

REALITY CRISIS - "Discharge Your Frustration" CD (HG:Fact)
That's right, a damn CD made my year-end top ten! This fucking hurricane of an album has more energy than almost anything I've ever heard. Amazing Burning Spirits-styled Japanese hardcore, soon to see a vinyl issue on Whisper In Darkness.

V/A - "Propaganda Is Hippies" LP (Kamaset Levyt)
This one set a new high-water-mark for comp LPs in the modern age. Not a single bad song. Much like the Propaganda Records comps of bygone days, this collection also highlights the apex of modern Finnish hardcore.

PIOGGIA NERA - "Teatri Di Menzogne" LP (Nuclear Chaos/Calimocho/Nkin Rehorz)
Teatri Di Menzogne has a primitivism to it that most don't capture these days. PIOGGIA NERA's brand of death-punk-influenced Italian hardcore hits me right where it counts.

EL BANDA - "Przejdzie Ci El Banda" LP (Pasazer/Trujaca Fala)
I've heard this record referred to as POST REGIMENT-lite due to ex-members of said band, which is so incredibly unfair. In my opinion, Polish punk has more of a regionally exclusive sound than any other country on Earth. I can't really explain what it is that they're doing differently either and I've thought about this at length, and while this record is quite a bit poppier than most, I think it fits right along side the classics like TZN XENNA, DEZERTER, POST REGIMENT, ARMIA, etc. just fine.

KYKLOOPPIEN SUKUPUUTTO - LP (Spild Af Vinyl/Hate/Tuska & Ahdistus)
If the sound of a record could cause tornados, this would be the one to do it. Quite possibly one of the most unpredictable and wild hardcore records I've ever heard. There is nothing even remotely sterile about the tunes crafted by this Finnish powerhouse. Its fresh ideas and flawless execution make this one of the best of the year.

DOUBLE NEGATIVE - "The Wonderful And Frightening World Of…" LP (No Way)
Truly inspired and ripping hardcore from a bunch of vets. Not much else to say other than if you like hardcore but think it's only a sport for the young, give this thing a spin and your mind will be blown.

REPERCUSSIONS - "Eleven Songs" 12" (540)
If I were to describe this thing in one word, it would have to be: intense. A straightforward wrecking ball of furious hardcore that makes me want to break things. Aaaaaarrrrgh!

TOTALITÄR - "Vi Är Eliten" LP (Prank)
TOTALITÄR's third and final full-length doesn't disappoint. Did anyone really think it would? I hope not. What else can I say, it's fucking TOTALITÄR!

HERO DISHONEST - "When The Shit Hits The Man" CD (Acme)
As I previously stated in my review of this CD earlier in the year, I had heard this band on record in the past and had seen them live but was never wooed in any way. Along comes *When The Shit Hits The Man* to spin my head straight around. This album, along with the KYKLOOPPIEN LP, proved that in 2007 the Finns really know how to make ugly, ripping, and incredibly inventive hardcore a reality. HERO DISHONEST's mix of thrash, excellent guitar playing, and elements that I don't even know how to begin to describe has created something groundbreaking. Also, this previously CD-only release has recently been given the vinyl treatment, as it should.

CRIMINAL DAMAGE - "No Solution" LP (Feral Ward)
To be honest this record didn't hit me as hard as last year's effort but that's not saying much at all. It just took a little longer for the catchy tunes to stick in my head. CRIM DAM have tweaked their sound a bit to be more simple and a tad darker overall but really not much has changed since the first record. This is simply great melodic punk.

Runners Up: CROW - "Hametsu No Haoto" 12" (Crow), SEX VID *Tania* EP (Dom America), POISON CONTROL *The Violent Years* EP (Deranged), ACID REFLUX *Vasectomy Boys* EP (No Way), KNIFE FIGHT *Crisis* LP (Lengua Armada), and WARKRIME *Get Loose* LP (No Way).

Fred Schrunk

2007 was a pretty fucking good year for punk rock, especially in the Bay Area. Lots of great of shows, lots of great band bands coming through, lots of great new bands coming out, and of course lots of amazing records. So when I wasn't obsessively listening to the GITS, the WIPERS, MARKED MEN, or MEATLOAF's Bat Outta Hell vol 1, *I was listening to these…in no particular order.*

SHELLSHAG - "Destroy Me I'm Yours" LP (Starcleaner)
This record totally gets my vote for best of 2007. SHELSHAG could be the biggest band in the world if they wanted. The hooks and riffs from this album will be echoing in your head for days afterwards. Garage punk rock at its best.

FUTURE VIRGINS - Both 7"s (Plan-It-X South)
As far as trashy, dirty pop punk goes, these guys are the best new band to come out of 2007. Members of SEXY, ADD/C, JACK PALANCE BAND; FUTURE VIRGINS combine the best parts of all the above. They put out two 7"s this year on Plan-It-X South and they're both amazing.

SLEEPOVER - Demo CD-R
Last time I was in the LA area, I was fortunate enough to see these guys play twice. They were fucking amazing. Teenage NIRVANA worship all the way. They had a CD-R demo and it kicks ass! I hope they're still a band.

THE REACTION - "Right Now" LP (Starcleaner)
This LP, just like SHELLSHAG's, came out on Starcleaners, who put out more quality stuff this year than any other label. And you wouldn't expect it, seeing as they haven't released much these last few years. I hope they keep it up. But anyway, REACTION is a three-piece out of San Francisco heavy on the '60 s mod influence but with a shitload of *rock*. They're the kind of band that will get everyone watching to do the slow head-bang in unison.

LEFTY LOOSIE - "100 Miles Per Hour" LP/CD (Repulsion)
Saw these guys in Milwaukee this last summer at a show in a house that looked like it was about to fall over. Guy named Kool-Aid lived there. Super catchy pop punk songs, I rocked out real hard. I got their LP, threw it in the van, and didn't listen until I got home two weeks later. When the needle hit the record, it was amazing-somehow the recording captured that hot, sweaty summer basement in the Midwest feel. It was like I was there all over again.

POTENTIAL JOHNS - 7" (Art Of The Underground)
Heard the split LP with these guys and CHINESE TELEPONES and loved it. But I think I like the songs on this even better. Real similar to HICKEY. I guess the tracks were written or recorded in the mid-'90s and just now got released. Worth the wait.

SURRENDER - "Last White Flag" EP (Self Released)
I'm not sure if this came out at the end of last year or beginning of this year, either way it should be mentioned. They're a peace punk band out of the Bay Area and one of the most amazing bands to see live. The guitar playing especially just kills me. He's got this weird style of...I don't know; it totally rules though.

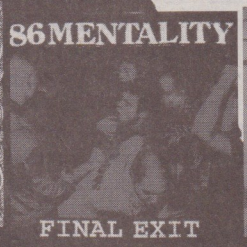
HIDDEN SPOTS - 7" (ADD Records)
A bit different then their demo; didn't like it much the first time I heard it 'cause it seemed like they were playing the songs too slow. But then people at my house kept playing it and it really grew on me, a lot. Now I can't get enough of it.

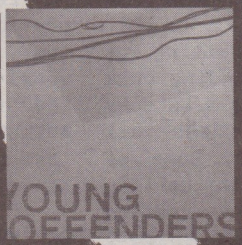
OFF WITH THEIR HEADS - "All Things Move Toward Their End" LP/CD (No Idea)
OFF WITH THEIR HEADS put out a crapload of 7"s this year. So many that it's almost laughable. And they're all really good, for the most part. People will come into the record store and ask, "Hey, which one of their 7"s should I get? There's like fifteen of them in here." And I used to tell them to just close their eyes and pick one. But now no one needs to have to pick cause No Idea compiled all the early records on to one album. Convenient, huh?

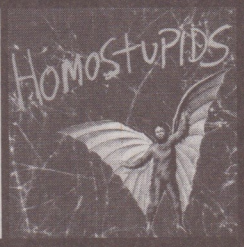
V/A - "Small Pool Records Four-Way Split" LP (Small Pool)
Awesome compilation here, featuring songs from NO PEOPLE, UNDERGROUND RAILROAD TO CANDYLAND, OFF WITH THEIR HEADS, and DRINKERS PURGITORY. I always really like the four-way split formula for a comp; three to five songs from each band. And all the songs from all these bands are great. Fuck yeah!

ONION FLAVORED RINGS / FUTURE VIRGINS - split EP (1-2-3-4 Go!)
Most of the people I've talked to about this 7" didn't like it. Or at least they didn't think it lived up to their expectations. I strongly disagree. Although I like the previously released FUTURE VIRGINS stuff better, I still think their songs here are awesome. But this record is really made by the ONION FLAVORED RINGS side. Two songs, both two of their best. A really good pairing of bands.

These records also made this year totally awesome for me...
BANANAS Slippery Subject LP reissue, BLOTTO collection CD/LP, GLEM GARDEN 7"s, DEAR LANDLORD both 7"s, TULSA LP, DELAY LP, SHANG-A-LANG 7", UNDERGROUND RAILROAD TO CANDYLAND LP (Recess)







Martin Sorrondeguy

Martin's Top 10 7"s!

1. ANTI-YOU - "Pig City Life" EP (Punx Before Profits)
"Dead Cities" is a great kick-off track, making this a killer.

2. FY FAN - EP (Feral Ward)
Right speed and intensity; this destroys.

3. ECOLI - "Big Stupid Ape" EP (Stress Domain)
Frantic and young-sounding, and the artwork of a KKK member's eyes getting shot out is essential!

4. ACID REFLUX - "Vasectomy Boys" EP (No Way)
Awesome hardcore with spirit and humor done by a couple of dorks. Amazing!

5. DEATH TOKEN - "4-Track Attack" EP (Even Worse)
Almost missed the boat on this one. Raw and insane hardcore power, anthemic intro followed by charging chaos always rules.

6. GOVERNMENT WARNING - "Arrested" EP (Grave Mistake)
This is the top of my list for the year I just can't get over how fucking catchy "Arrested" is. I want to go fucking crazy and wreck everything in the vicinity including myself. Great!

7. WASTED TIME - "No Shore" EP (Grave Mistake)
Live and on record these boys knocked me on my ass.

8. KIELTOLAKI - EP (Moo Cow)
This band has proven themselves to be the best thing Finland has

puked up in quite sometime. Power, speed, and a lack of stability make for this type of Scandi punk a masterpiece.

9. SEX VID - "Tania" EP (Dom America)
Pull your hair out and chew your fucking nails 'til they bleed and turn this shit up!

10. YOUNG OFFENDERS - 7" (Parts Unknown)
After an exhausting hardcore assault I need to wind down with this toe-tapper.

Top 10 Twelve Inches
1. GULAG - LP (Sell Our Souls)
Guttural vocals over driving mid-paced hardcore; a strong release.

2. DOUBLE NEGATIVE - "The Wonderful And Frightening World Of…" LP (No Way)
The vocalist has an awesome style accompanied by ferocious music. This rips!

3. V/A - "Propaganda Is Hippies" LP (Kamaset Levyt)
All the powerful bands Finland has produced on one record-unsurpassable!

4. OS ESTUDANTES - LP (Laja)
US-influenced Brazilian punk sung in Portuguese. Awesome!

5. PIOGGIA NERA - "Teatri Di Menzogne" LP (Nuclear Chaos/Calimocho/Nkin Rehorz)
Dark and eerie Italian anarcho-punk-styled stuff here-a true standout.

6. CRAWLERS - 12" (Blind Spot)
Enough hooks and turntable visits at the *MRR* compound pushed this one into my top ten. Cool shit.

7. KYKLOOPPIEN SUKUPUUTTO - LP (Spild Af Vinyl/Hate/Tuska & Ahdistus)
Creative song structures while maintaining power and intensity.

8. REPERCUSSIONS - "Eleven Songs" 12" (540)
A collision of killer punk musicians results in this great piece of shit. A total audio attack!

9. TOTALITÄR - "Vi Är Eliten" LP (Prank)
They are masters of this genre. All praises.

10. VICIOUS - "Alienated" LP (Feral Ward)
This is my most played 12" of the year. Infectious punk-every track is amazing!

Reissues:
TERVEET KÄDET EPs (Höhnie), POHJASAKKA EP (bootleg), HEART ATTACK *God Is Dead* EP (Broken), BAGS *All Bagged Up* LP (Artifix), PANDEMONIUM EP (bootleg), TRAGICS *Mommi I'm a Misfit* EP, IMPACT/EU'S ARSE split EP, DESTRUCKTIONS LP, ABSURD *Blodig Stad* EP (bootleg), ESKORBUTO

Phil Lantz

WASTED TIME - "No Shore" EP (Grave Mistake)
Probably spent more time on my record player than any of the others in my other top ten. Fast, driving, aggressive riffs, solid drumming, and perfectly balanced songs about hating life without sounding like a crybaby. Flawless.

TOTAL ABUSE - "Demo '06" EP (Even Worse)
I had the privilege of reviewing this record a few months back and still have not stopped listening to it. Ten raw, thrashy, and disgusting-sounding jams on one 7"-what more do you want from a hardcore record?

VIOLENT MINDS - "Eyes of Death" LP (Parts Unknown)
Eyes of Death had been recorded for about two years now and was finally released in 2007. This band's previous two EPs were amazing and sounded more like NEGATIVE APPROACH and early AGNOSTIC FRONT. Since then they've gone for more of an early POISON IDEA mixed with MOTÖRHEAD sound and it just rocks!

WARKRIME - "Get Loose" LP (No Way)
Aside from the hype that has surrounded this band lately (positive or negative or whatever), WARKRIME put out one of the most raging hardcore LPs of the year. Still has the same snotty URBAN WASTE style of their previous EP, but combined with more of a BL'AST! element this time.

REGULATIONS - "Different Needs" EP (Havoc)
Props to REGULATIONS for putting out another great classic-sounding punk record. No props for doing a US tour and skipping the Bay Area all together this last year. Some of these songs sounded straight up like the GERMS but with a more refined musicianship applied to it, which I guess could go either way for some. Me? I have no complaints.

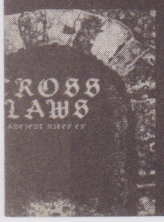
SEX VID - "Tania" EP (Dom America)
Loudest band of the year…seeing SEX VID live is even better than this EP. You're sure to have permanent damage done to your ears afterwards. Aside from that, this record has four of the rawest hardcore tracks to come out in 2007. The FIX *Jan's Rooms* EP of our time. I'm sure I'm not the only one with this record on their top ten list.

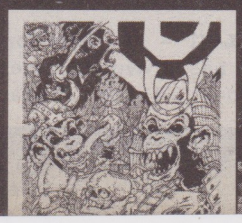
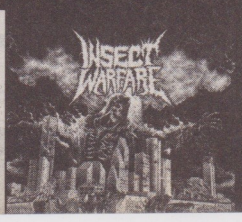
YOUNG OFFENDERS - EP (Parts Unknown)
This band is always fun to see live and in 2007 this amazing EP finally came out. Can't wait for the next one, guys.

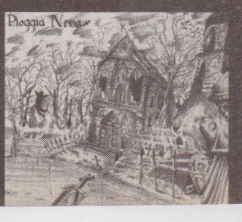
VICIOUS - "Igen" EP (Feral Ward)
I fell in love with this band's previous records last year and feel that *Igen* was a good finale. Three songs that still sound a lot like the early LA punk bands and the ADVERTS, but add even more hooks that makes it impossible to not listen this single over and over again.

86 MENTALITY - "Final Exit" EP (Deranged)
IRON CROSS beats up the FAITH and steals all their songs.

PUNCH IN THE FACE - "At War With Everybody" LP (Lengua Armada)
Finally, after four years, this band came out with an amazing record. Great blend of hardcore and rock 'n' roll.





Ken Sanderson

I blew the actual deadline to turn in a top ten, and was nicely reminded by the MRR honchos that I could still slide it under the door. Top tens for the year are a funny thing, as so much media comes out now that it's kind of impossible to say what the overwhelming zeitgeist of the time is, and presumptuous on a general level that people now rush these lists out with such fervor in like the middle of November trying to stake claim to it... But I also think it's an attempt to stake claim for what you feel is culturally/musically/artistically important...and I guess by comparing different people's lists you can maybe get a sense of a few things that brightened their world that you might have missed in yours. So anyway, in no order:

1. All the releases I put out on my label Prank this year (Prank)
These are always the records I spend the most time with and know the best, but 2007 was hands-down Prank's best year this decade-with SIGNAL LOST's *Prosthetic Screams* LP, TOTALITÄR's *Vi Är Eliten* LP, BORN/DEAD's *The Final Collapse* LP and IRON LUNG's *Sexless//No Sex* LP; long-delayed reissues of CHRIST ON PARADE's *Sounds of Nature* LP and TALK IS POISON's *Condensed Humanity* LP finally seeing the light of day; the WORLD BURNS TO DEATH DVD, which was an ambitious project to tackle. Thanks to everyone who picked up one of these releases this year and 2008 is already revving up to be great and I am stoked! Since I'm obviously biased there-beyond that, my favorite label of the year...
Runner Up: **Tankcrimes Records**
Not since the David Hayes era of Lookout has a label served as focal point for the local scene, while at the same time releasing great records as diverse as GHOUL, INSTANT ASSHOLE, PELIGRO SOCIAL, POPULATION REDUCTION, DEADFALL, and ANNIHILIATION TIME. In a way, I've always regretted that Prank eventually became more a sound-based label than a specifically local-based label, so I can't fling enough kudos to Scotty and crew for documenting all the various points in the Bay Area scene and keeping a surprising and consistent quality between releases.

2. UNKIND - "Hangen Syliin" LP (Combat Rock)
This LP, their third, is *fucking great*. The production is great, the music is great-the best combination of the HIS HERO IS GONE/ARTIMUS PYLE-style low-end, the melodic, rock attack of TRAGEDY/DISFEAR, and the urgent, severe vocals of VICTIMS. It's driven by relentless drumming and delivered with textured complexity, taking it to another level. *Fucking great.*
Runner Up in the Heavy Tonnage Department: **NEUROSIS - "Given to the Rising" LP (Neurot)**
While their last couple of records veered off too far into ambient/TOM WAITS territory for me, this newest one has enough brutal, crushing riffage to sharply remind of their long reign throughout the 1990s as a central axis from which all sorts of underground extreme metal/hardcore took influence and spun out of. It's not *Word As Law*, *Souls at Zero*, *Through Silver in Blood*, or *Times of Grace*, but commendably, NEUROSIS continues to walk forward and attempt to reach new landmark heights. Play loud.

3. INSECT WARFARE - "World Extermination" LP (RSR/625 Thrash)
Typically, I am not a fan of grind as a genre, as lot of it just wallows in the lowest common denominator and fails to do more than fill in the prerequisite blanks for the style, but somehow, every year someone turns in a record so extreme and inventive within the genre, beating you senseless with unrelenting savagery and musical insanity, that it's impossible *not* to take notice. This year, that award goes to Houston's INSECT WARFARE. I saw them live a few years back and thought they were cool, but this takes things to a place beyond that. Unrelenting in speed and impact, totally blasting grind! Ace with killer cover to boot!!
Runner Up in the Manic Intensity Department: **EXTORTION - "Control" EP (Deep Six)**
Okay, it's on Deep Six. Good chance it sounds like INFEST... Awesome!! It does!! This Australian band follows an already collectable LP and 7" with ten more intense tracks of curt blasting, with the proto-powerviolence lumber chucked into tumultuous 60-second thrash blasts...what's in the water in Western Australia that it continually churns out these manic bands?

4. INVASION - LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
From Spain, combining DISCHARGE-ish influences with a Japanese feel reminiscent of the EXECUTE (particularly the distorted, shouted hollow vocals and offbeat mix of their live compilation tracks). INVASION fills one side of their LP with quick blasting, and then delivers a long, drawn-out single track on the flip. Cool record, and look for them on tour here in the US in May.
Runner Up in the Blasting European Hardcore Coming Soon to the US Department: **GASMASK TERROR - LP (Ratbone)**
From France, combining rock-ish Japanese and Swedish hardcore influences with harsh, throaty vocals to make a totally solid LP. They'll be also here in May 2008, out on the East Coast with BLACK DOVE (ex-AWAKENING). Awesome!

5. GIUDA - LP (Agipunk)
Manic, blown-out hardcore from Italy that simultaneously sounds old with the frantic shouted Italian lyrics and slightly chaotic delivery, and modern with the heavier musical delivery and complex compositions. Cool LP that builds from track to track in intensity. Stoked they'll tour the US with AGHAST later this year.
Tied in with the Cool Italian Hardcore Department: **PIOGGIA NERA - "Teatri Di Mendogne" LP**
Simultaneous sounds like a weird 1980s goth/hardcore/horror-song-driven *Hell Comes To Your House* combination, and the earliest era of Japanese punk where all sorts of influences were thrown into the mix, but by virtue of production, delivery, and creepy, garbled vocals comes out unmistakably punk. Where's *their* US tour?

6. GAUZE - "5th" CD (XXX)
No brainer. Psychotic intensity and great songs making you wish they wouldn't wait a decade between each record. While I still haven't spent as much time with it as their third LP (a record that

was taped onto cassette, and then by default glued to my car's stereo for the better part of a year or longer in the early 1990s) or their fourth (recorded shortly after they came here in the mid-'90s and played most of the tracks live) to ingrain into part of my being like those are, but with each listen it's getting closer.

Tied in with the Japanese "Old Masters' Category: **CROW - "Hametsu No Haoto" 12" (Crow)**

CROW followed up the *Bloody Tear* LP perfectly with this 12"-a churning metallic crusher on side one and an unbelievable marathon mega-mix of five non-stop tracks of their chaotic metallic hardcore assault.

7. AGE - "This Spider Rules Your Emotions" EP (Black Water)

Technically a reissue of this Japanese band's CD-EP from a few years back, now on vinyl for the first time. Whatever, it's worth the price alone for the build-up to where the singer yells "SSSSSSSPPPPPIIIIIIIIIIIIID-DDDDDDAAAAAAAAHHHHHHH" and then the chaotic metal punk attack ensues. Kudos to HELLSHOCK for bringing them here in 2007-one of my favorite live shows of the year.

Runner Up in the Guitar-Solo-Laden Ripping Hardcore Contest: **SKITKIDS / NIGHTMARE - split EP (HG:Fact)**

Sweden's SKITKIDS, who have an overdriven scattershot rock TOTALITÄR attack with cool lyrical imparts, and Japan's NIGHTMARE, who set searing vocals and wild, squiggly guitar soloing atop their quick, drum-driven pummeling and ferocious jangly guitar noise, offer a boss continuation of both bands' recent high energy releases.

8. REALITY CRISIS - "Discharge Your Frustration" CD (HG:Fact)

Despite the EXTREME NOISE TERROR "Holocaust In Your Head" pisstake cover, the ENT influence only really shows in the vocal trade-offs, delivered over classically crafted old style "melodic 'n' metal" Japanese hardcore. Totally boss, song-driven, and surprisingly catchy, making me regret missing their legendary Burnt Ramen gig a few years back even more.

Runner Up in We're Doing This Classic Style of Our Native Country Really, Really Well: **KOLOKOL - "Flammer Og Farger" LP (Moo Cow)**

Despite the somewhat weak vocals, *Flammer Og Farger* is the closest anyone's stabbed at the intricate, baroque later SO MUCH HATE/STENGTE DORER Norwegian hardcore style and come out with such boss results.

9. V/A - "Propaganda Is Hippies" LP (Kamaset Levyt)

34 tracks of chaotic 1982-era Finnish hardcore revival from KIELTOLAKI, VIIMEINEN KOLONNA, VÄÄRINKÄSITYS, TOTUUS, SOTATILA, OMAISUUSVAHINKO and YHTEISKUNNAN YSTÄVÄT, but pulled off with vigor and intensity on par with the originals. Cool disc.

Runner Up in the Blown-Out Boisterous Rampaging Old Style Finnish Hardcore Category: **KIELTOLAKI "Totaalisen Tuhon Huominen" EP (Moo Cow)**

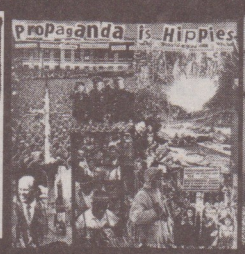
A rampaging 7" of the same blown-out, chaotic RIISTETYT style.

10. CAREER SUICIDE - " Attempted Suicide" LP (Deranged)

While not rewriting their trademark style, this LP has such a stop-on-a-dime delivery, even compared to their other good records, that it rises itself way above the seeming legions of bands aping the Mystic Records generic '80s US hardcore sound right now, separating itself from the rest with its overdrive speed, like an RKL or CIRCLE JERKS record played at 78 RPM, and blazing by with precision track after track.

Runners Up in the Straight-Up US Hardcore Category:

Lots of good, solid records of this style in 2007, so a long list here, with no notations: WASTED TIME *No Shore* EP (Grave Mistake), GOVERNMENT WARNING *Arrested* EP (Grave Mistake), REPERCUSSIONS *Eleven Songs* 12" (540), PUNCH IN THE FACE *At War With Everybody* LP (Lengua Armada), LOOK BACK AND LAUGH State Illusion 12". All solid, "cut the shit, start the pit," ripping stuff.



Bruce Roehrs

86 MENTALITY - "Final Exit" EP (Deranged)

Yes! On the heels of a triumphant West Coast tour, 86 MENTALITY has released the monumental *Final Exit* EP! No other band in recent memory has melded the aggression of skinhead rock with punk rock frenzy like 86 MENTALITY! This band destroyed modern skinhead music as we knew it in 2003 with their unrepentant hardcore EP, *Life Trap*, on the illustrious Grave Mistake label. Four years on, 86 MENTALITY is every bit as dangerous and uncompromising! The *Final Exit* EP on Deranged Records eliminates all the other bands of this ilk. The raw power of Steve's vocals combined with the mind-boggling guitar wizardry of Matt are a fitting challenge for all the bands coming up! For sheer power and over-the-precipice danger-zone antics no other band in the world touches these fucks! That goes back to our original theory-the Northeastern United States still dominates the forbidden areas of hardcore and skinhead trouble. They always will! On this EP, 86 MENTALITY slashes through "Anti-Society," "Called Out, "Degenerate," Crash the Gates," "Next Generation," and "Out of Control." Fucking devastating! Order this testosterone-fueled shit from Deranged Records!

DISCO ASSAULT - CD (Ritalin Kid)

Every once in a while a punk or skinhead CD slips in under the radar and blows the fine-tuned *MRR* review system all to hell! DISCO ASSAULT is one such animal! The DISCO ASSAULT escaped the constant vigilance of the parole officers in Windsor, Ontario, Canada, and

snuck into the studio to squeeze out seven monstrous punk anthems that will reduce your flimsy reality to mere shards. "Crank Up the Amps" is merely a harbinger of the extreme danger that's coming! "Negative Outlook" will make you very uncomfortable. "Blood for Your God" will cripple your ass-leave you gasping for air and begging for your life! The grim outlook that DISCO ASSAULT offers about religious power brokers sacrificing young soldiers for profit is fucking frightening! Track number four, "Obey," is insufficient preparation for the hard-boiled punk 'n' roll DISCO ASSAULT mayhem that comes next! "City Street Kids" tears your friggin' testicles off right close to the stump! Skinhead rock 'n' roll doesn't get any better than this!! This is an epic rock 'n' roll journey through the hinterlands, summoning up the ghost of Jerry Lee Lewis! You fucks will not get a chance to catch your breath! "Just Like You" and "Profiles Burning" are frontal hardcore assaults to the Nth degree!! This is extreme hardcore bloodshed with no remorse! Excellent! Let's hear more from DISCO ASSAULT!

NUTS AND BOLTS - "We Don't Wanna Wake Up" CD (Funeral)
Listen up Skins and Punks! NUTS AND BOLTS have completely conquered the skinhead scene in Oakland, California, and all the surrounding environs! This band of freethinking, independent individuals has produced the finest skinhead product to appear in the Bay Area in many years! If these working class anthems don't tug at your heart-strings, you might as well put a .44 Magnum in your mouth, pull the trigger, and end your miserable life! NUTS AND BOLTS, Oakland, California's authentic blue-collar rock 'n' rollers, deliver the shit on the *We Don't Wanna Wake Up* CD! Jagger and company lead off with sincere skinhead inspiration in the lyrics to "I Believe." Jagger sings "Never give in to them / Fight back, believe in yourself." Yes! NUTS AND BOLTS chug through "This Is Hell," "Beauty Sleep," and "Young, Reckless, Responsibly Insane," without losing one step. Next, you get to hear the most heart-rending song ever written about a skinhead love affair: "Better Days." This song is fucking great! You fucks are in luck-it keeps getting better! The song "This Game Called Life" reminds you young skins and punks not to let them control your life-excellent! Next, NUTS AND BOLTS takes you through a musical adventure with "Cocodrie Disaster," "78:94," and "The Whites of Your Lies." Yes! Now you get a skinhead motherload: song ten is "Nuts and Bolts," and your boots will be moving! The momentum of this perfect skinhead anthem is infectious! You will be spilling beer all over the fucking place! In this well-crafted Oakland skinhead CD, NUTS AND BOLTS claim proudly "We are more than just friends-we are family!" That "family" clearly extends to all the fiends and fans of NUTS AND BOLTS. The band finishes off this fine CD with "Never Forget," "The Reducer," and "Another Day in Paradise." Fucking top-shelf skinhead rock 'n' roll for you fucks!

SHORT FUSE - "Blight" EP (Assault)
Hey you cretins! SHORT FUSE is the unheralded champion of German hardcore! SHORT FUSE is the real shit! No other hardcore punk band from Europe comes close! These intense motherfuckers play HC as if their lives depended on it! The agro punk venom that SHORT FUSE demonstrates sweeps the playing field clean! No more safe-as-milk crappy powerpop bands genuflecting to spineless pop. This punk is prickly, confrontational HC that makes you question everything that comes from the church or the central government! SHORT FUSE established their power base with a devastating single and a take-no-prisoners US tour called "Fruitless Efforts." Fuck all! This angry punk bile screams and kicks and rants about the treatment of working class men and women. The current SHORT FUSE EP on Assault Records in entitled *Blight*. This slice of blue collar punk pride is shining with honesty and commitment! SHORT FUSE rage through "Blight," Self-Abuse," "Or Anyone Like You," "Terminology," "Smug," and "You Already Stank Yesterday." Yes, these men emanate truth and credibility! Bands like this that are true to the cause give hope to all the apathetic fucks that have lost their spirit for the fight. Rise up! Lift your head. Don't ever give in!

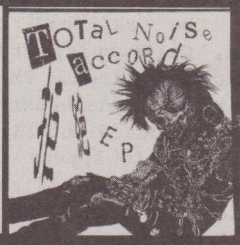
THE WRETCHED ONES - "Make It Happen" CD (Headache)
Fuck yes! You fucking fortunate fucks! The WRETCHED ONES, the band that changed the course of American Oi! music forever, is back with a bang! Armen and his band of veteran rock and rollers have dropped the *Make It Happen* CD on the unsuspecting skins and punks! These journeyman skinheads still have some cantankerous guitars/axes to grind! You will smile when you listen to "Make It Happen"! This tune urges you to give 100% to the battle-"you'll never forgive yourself if you don't!" We slam right into "You're doing it Wrong" about those stubborn workers who can't understand why it "looks like shit." As you listen to a new WRETCHED ONES CD, you might find yourself pining for older songs like "We're Not Stopping Now," "Working Man," "Bottles and Cans," "Life Is Hard," or "Dear Wolfgang"-don't despair! The new CD comes up right in your face with the track "Guess What...I'm Stuck in a Rut"! Yes sir, this is classic fucking WRETCHED ONES shit! The band segues right into "The Rockers"-another barn-burner about the kinship between diverse kinds of rockers. This is a good song! The WRETCHED ONES offer you a tongue-in-cheek assessment of the dynamics of the neighborhood with "Skin Neighbor-Your New Neighbor." Fucking great!

HAMMERLOCK - "Forgotten Range" CD (Steel Cage)
Hey you Confederacy of Scum fucks! In 2007, you treated to an earth-shaking album from an authentic American rock 'n' roll outfit! The new HAMMERLOCK CD is called *Forgotten Range*. On this CD, Travis, Elizabeth, and Mike clobber you from the get-go with "Conquest Train." Travis and Liz can craft a country rock tune as good as anybody in the business! HAMMERLOCK continue to work you over with "Living On Retreads" and "The Wrong Side Of Town." Fucking great! DAVID ALLEN COE would be proud! The title cut, "Forgotten Range," bemoans the situation of a man trapped in the wrong era. Brilliant! BILLY JOE SHAVER is paying attention! The song "No Man's Land," co-written by Mr. Simon Stokes, Travis, and Elizabeth, is an insant American music classic! We progress through "One Big Mess" by Elizabeth, and "You Can't Stop War" by Travis.

Listen to "Lay Me Down" by Elizabeth Kenny. Great! This CD will appear alongside WAYON JENNINGS, PORTER WAGONER, and GEORGE JONES in the "American" section in your local music store! Get one!

V/A - "Anti-Disco League Volume One: True to the Cause" CD (TKO)
Fuck! Phil Templar, Carl Templar, and the esteemed Mr. Mark Rainy have released a magnificent skinhead opus entitled *Anti-Disco League Volume One*. This CD is a volatile mixture of punk attitude and S.H.A.R.P. skin pride! RETALIATOR, from merry old England, kick off he festivities with the skinhead anthem "Give Us Back St. Georges Day." This opening salvo whets your appetite for destruction. You will not be disappointed. The TEMPLARS deliver the motherfucking guns with their song "Take on the World." Fucking brilliant! You skinheads need tolisten to this this working class music from all over the planet-these are brothers and sisters in the endless struggle of workers against management! We progress through cutting-edge skinhead brilliance exhibited by CRASHED OUT (England) and their ditty "Heroes," and lapse right into the charming French skinhead outfit HAIRCUT with their catchy "France Perdue." Fucking great! We migrate along the route, listening to BULLDOG SAMURAI (Japan) and STOMPER 98 (Germany), to arrive at the COUNTERATTACK tune "Brick and Stone," with its anti-war sentiment, "so much brawn and so little brains." This kernal of truth is valuable to all patriotic skins an punks everywhere! Fucking killer! You lucky fucks will move through "Des Kontrol," by SOUTHPAW MANNERS. Next we get accomplished production efforts of ON FILE from Scotland, sheer punk bad attitude from PISSED ON ARRIVAL from the United States of America. Thisis followed by the sweet melodies of skinhead music's beautiful queen bee in DEADLINE. A.P.A. (formerly ADOLPH AND THE PISS ARTISTS) crack out the most dynamic track of the entire CD with their "Go Home" track and its slow menacing lyrical uneasiness! Chet's voice is one of the rare tools that can both inspire and discomfort! This is a fucking rare burst of unique American skinhead rock that will never be replaced in your lifetime! Grab hold of Chet's angst and ride it to its untimely demise! The well-respected men, the DEVILSKINS from Italy, offer up "Periferia." This shit gives off sparks! The next treat for you fucks is "You and Me" by the amazing Indonesian skinhead outfit NO MAN'S LAND. Fucking great! URBAN RIOT, from New York City, USA, finish off this gut-wrenching compilation! Thanks to Phil, Carl, and Mark for exposing the youth of America to all this valuable international skinhead wealth!

Honorable Mentions:
FUNERAL SHOCK *III* EP (Cowabunga), REPERCUSSIONS *Eleven Songs* 12" (540), TERMINAL STATE *Sick* EP, DOUBLE NEGATIVE *The Wonderful and Frightening World Of...* LP (No Way), ECOLI *Big Stupid Ape* EP (Stress Domain), KIELTOLAKI *Totaalisen Tuhon Huominen* EP (Moo Cow), CHRISTIAN CLUB *Final Confession* EP, LRF *Roughs and Smooths* CD, WASTED TIME *No Shore* EP (Grave Mistake), COCK SPARRER *Here We Stand* CD (TKO), LIFE TRAP *Bleak Reality* EP (No Way), CROSS LAWS *Behind the Curve* EP, ALTERNATIVE ACTION/MARCHING ORDERS split EP (Longshot), EVIL CONDUCT *King of Kings* CD (Knock Out), NEVER HEALED/VIOLENT MINDS split EP (Spiderghost Press Gang), AGNOSTIC FRONT *For the Family* EP (Bridge Nine), V/A *Come On California-Show 'Em What You Got* LP (Durty Mick), VIOLENT ARREST 12" (Deranged)



Eric Butterworth

SHELLSHAG - "Destroy Me I'm Yours" LP (Starcleaner)
The diversity that this band can produce with just two people blows my mind. This record is a package deal, with great album art and perfect songwriting from start to finish. SHELLSHAG is creating something new-get into it.

YOUNG OFFENDERS - EP (Parts Unknown) and 7" (Art of the Underground)
Both 7"s they released this year have been on constant play for me. There is nothing better than semi-intimidating dudes playing non-threatening, feel-good punk. Put your arm around the person next to you and raise your drink high with a smile.

ECOLI - "Big Stupid Ape" EP (Stress Domain)
This was one of those "heard no hype" records, so I had no preconceived ideas of what was up. When the needle hit, I was stoked to the max. Raging fucking hardcore that will get your fist pumping while your brains are shooting out your ears.

TRADITIONAL FOOLS - EP (Chocolate Covered)
Besides being the best live band of 2007, these SoCal transplants brought sun, skate, and good vibes our direction with this four-song epic garage/surf/punk record.

UNDERGROUND RAILROAD TO CANDYLAND - LP (Recess)
This record gets the catchiest release of the year award. I'm a big TOYS THAT KILL fan and I think I even like this stuff more. It's along the same wavelength, only a bit more diverse.

DIRTY LOOKS - EP (Iron Pier)
Mid-tempo punk coming from NYC; it's about time New York produced something good. Ooooh, you hear

that New York?! Melodic music with interesting songwriting accompanied by some of my favorite vocals.

WASTED TIME - "No Shore" EP (Grave Mistake)
Energetic, heart-pumping hardcore from the good folks at Grave Mistake Records. This record is slightly better than other hardcore releases in that they maintain my interest through the whole thing with killer hooks and apocalyptic walls of intensity.

NODZZZ - "I Don't Wanna (Smoke Marijuana)/We Are the Only Animals" (Make a Mess)
A simple two-song single from this simple Bay Area pop trio. Writing simple pop songs while remaining punk without being pop punk is a talent that these gents possess. Hear it once and you'll hum it for life.

HEY GIRL! - "Spill Your Guts" LP (Thrillhouse)
An all-girl trio from San Francisco whose lyrics cover all the important bases: summertime, tour vans flipping, and Britney Spears. If I were to start to describe the sound, I would say it starts with RAOOUL and it ends somewhere with MARIAH CAREY.

MUGRE - EP (Collapse)
This record is for all the people who miss late-'90s/early-'00s hardcore. That reference pertains somewhat musically but also to the heartfelt lyrics sung in English and Spanish. If you get a chance to see them live plant, yourself front and center and you will understand.

Live Bands:
GIANT HAYSTACKS - Last Show
Played in a crowded basement with a half-working PA to a more than energetic crowd. It is shows like this that reaffirms why I am a punk.
GORDON SOLIE MOTHERFUCKERS
Blood, flying bodies, airborne trash cans, chains, broken glass.
AUDACITY
The mystical powers of a house show can make you pogo ten feet high.
PARASITES GO!
Talented youngsters that will blow old farts out of the water.
BLONDE AMBITION
Ex-members of all your favorite short-lived bands.

D X

Are you really going to care about THAT record next year?!

1. CARBONAS - LP (Goner)
These assholes are trying to make your ZERO BOYS LPs useless. Fuck them.

2. EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING - "You Let Me Be Honest With You/We'll Be Turned On" (White Denim)
This was the year Australia stepped up. I hate to wave the flag, but I am going to. This record is heavy on the A-side, but what a song. Murderpunk 2007.

3. PINK REASON "Cleaning The Mirror" LP (Siltbreeze)
Drug-fucked, sewer-level pop hits dragged through the garage, the bedroom, the bed.

4. IRON LUNG - "Sexless//No Sex" LP (Prank), HATRED SURGE side of split w/ ENDLESS BLOCKADE (Schizophrenic), and EXTORTION - "Control" EP (Deep Six)
Classic top ten trick in order to cram more meat in, but I really have to pull it out (euphemism: masturbation). Time will indicate how appropriate it is for me to list these guys together, but I have faith in this holy trinity: they play psychopathic, violent hardcore with the exact kind of dirge and neurosis that you need...

5. OUT WITH A BANG - "Love My Life" EP (Fashionable Idiots)
Apparently if you shoot up into your genitals while blasting this record *only* through the right channel, it sounds much like the VELVET UNDERGROUND.

6. LAMPS - LP (In The Red)
Fuzzed-out stomp which brings to mind X *Aspirations*, which is a beautiful, beautiful thing.

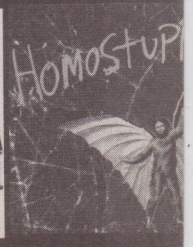
7. CLOCKCLEANER - "Babylon Rules" LP (Load)
Nice guys don't play seedy, depraved garbage like this.

8. SEX VID - "Tania" EP (Dom America) and REPERCUSSIONS - "Eleven Songs" 12" (540)
No doubt you've just endured page after page of proselytizing as to the strengths of this heavy pair. Well deserved. Crank up really high.

9. HOMOSTUPIDS - "The Intern" LP (Parts Unknown)
Creeps from Cleveland pissing in the punch.

10. AGENTS OF ABHORRENCE - " earth.water.sun" CD (625 Thrash)
Grindcore most potent. Murder grind.

I must respectfully bow towards the graceful efforts of CUT SICK, KNIFE FIGHT, VIOLENT MINDS, OOGA BOOGAS, NOTHING PEOPLE, WOODEN SHJIPS, PIERCED ARROWS, IRON AGE, NEVER HEALED, SNAKE APARTMENT, SEVERED HEAD OF STATE and JAY REATARD for making this such a good year to be in debt... and suggest that, were the GEHENNA 7" in my home, this list would either be a) very different or b) not printed. Lengua Armada, Parts Unknown, Feral Ward and (as always!) In The Red did an excellent job in their respective enterprises. Z-GUN and DIRTY ALLEYS, DIRTY MINDS are excellent fanzines! Thank you, goodnight.



Scott Moore

WASTED TIME - "No Shore" EP (Grave Mistake)
I thought that the first WASTED TIME single was a decent record, but it didn't grab me the way that this one did. This six-song ripper draws more from Boston than the current crop of '80s throwback bands. Thankfully, it's more Hardcore than Nardcore. Choke-style vocals over driving songs that really dig their claws into your brain. It's also nice to open up a record and see well-written, poignant lyrics that don't read like they were written in the studio. Nice one.

REPERCUSSIONS - "Eleven Songs" 12" (540)
I don't even really know what to say about this one. Somehow, these four freaks came together in Austin, Texas, where only the drummer remains, and wrote some of the most relentless straight-up hardcore to come out in 2007. Anyone who is a fan of DEATHREAT will hear the similarities as they share a guitar player. Not only do the riffs on this record stand out, but the vocal delivery gives it an over-the-top urgency. "This ain't no happy, fun-time hardcore."

TOTALITÄR "Vi Är Eliten" LP (Prank)
After twenty years of awesome records, they decided to call it quits with this monster. It is true to TOTALITÄR style. About forty seconds into the record there is a guitar break where the guitar plays some sort of scale and it kicks back in with this simple solo. I believe that this is called a hook. It worked. Followed up with a stomper. You either like it or you don't (like punk).

KYKLOOPPIEN SUKUPUUTTO - LP (Spild Af Vinyl/Hate/Tuska & Ahdistus)
Records like this don't come around too often. To me this sounds like a blend of traditional Finnish hardcore mixed with a slew of other influences that touch on CORROSION OF CONFORMITY and even BLACK FLAG. Don't get me wrong, this isn't some trendy, "just been in our rooms listening to KILLDOZER and FLAG and feelin' so damaged, bro" bullshit that seems to be the typical fare. I feel that this is one of the most original and refreshing hardcore records to come out in 2007.

DEATH TOKEN - "4-Track Attack" EP (Even Worse)
I was so stoked to hear this EP by this Danish band. The first record struck me as not so good and after their *Walking Dead Life* EP I was convinced that they would slip off into some dumb-ass neo-folk band-mostly due to the little ditty tacked onto the end of the title track. I was wrong. This one blazes in the Scandi-Disbeat style of hardcore and at times Japan's FRAMTID comes to mind, mostly in the vocal styling. The added occasional dissonant guitar solo bits and the raw-as-fuck recording push this one over the top.

LEBENDEN TOTEN - "Death Culture Deprivation" 8" (Overthrow)
First of all, I love everything that this band has ever done. Their ability to write songs that sound so noisy and blown-out, at the same time remain catchy and memorable, is what I have always liked about them the most. This one is no exception. This thing's got everything you could ask for-tons of guitar feedback, a wah pedal, a bouncy 1-2 number a la "Forced Consent" from their second EP, and it folds out into a poster. Ear-shattering UK and Japanese inspired noise Noise Not Music attack on your senses.

COMPLICATIONS - "Blinded/Coffin" (Feral Ward)
The new band featuring three-fourths of Montreal's now defunct BORN DEAD ICONS (R.I.P.). This is their first effort since they released their demo a couple of years back. The music relies more on the drive of the bass and drums than the full-blown distortion sound of BDI, leaving more space for the raspy vocals and cool interplay between the clean-sounding guitars. They have a unique, dark sound all of their own. Looking for ward to an LP in 2008.

SKITKIDS / NIGHTMARE - split EP (HG:Fact)
You know that the NIGHTMARE side is gonna be good as soon as you hear the feedback and fucked-up distorted bass. Two songs of blazing Japanese hardcore that don't let up. SKITKIDS rip it up on the flip with their Swedish interpretation of the more rock 'n' roll Japcore style. I'm talking' serious riffs here. Out of the split releases that came out last year, this is the one that leaves me confused as to which side I like the best. That is a really rare occasion when it comes to the split.

GOVERNMENT WARNING - "Arrested" EP (Grave Mistake)
The title track on this record is unforgettable from the first note. It's a mid-paced anthem about fighting cops and shit that sounds like it was written by an Agnew. The remaining the songs are stop-on-a-dime, adderall-induced hardcore that rely on possibly the best drummer in punk and a singer who sounds like a hyperactive delinquent.

INVASION - LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
This record is all about the atmosphere for me. I am not sure if it's the delay and echo effects or the raw recording. The DISCHARGE and Japanese influences are there, but the anguished vocals really make this stand out. These Spaniards will be coming to the US in May. Check 'em out.

Jaime Hoy

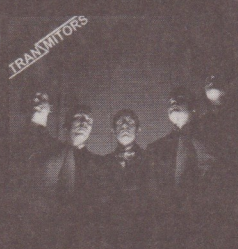
CEREMONY - "Scared People" 7" Bridge Nine)
DEFEATIST - "In Praise Of False Hope" 7" (Chainsaw Safety), "Thanatonic State" 7" (Level Plain), and "Mechanisms Sanctimonious Filth" split 7" (Level Plain)
DOUBLE NEGATIVE - "The Wonderful And Frightening World Of…" CD (No Way)
GAUZE - "5th" CD (XXX)
INSECT WARFARE - "World Extermination" LP (RSR/625 Thrash)
KOROVA - If There's A Future" EP (Victimized)
LOOKING FOR AN ANSWER - "Buscando Una Respuesta" demo reissue (Living Dead Society/Under the Knnife)
ROTTEN SOUND - "Cycles" CD (Spinefarm)
TRAP THEM - "Cunt Heirs To The Throne" 7" (Trash Art)
UNHOLY GRAVE - "Revoltage" LP (Agromosh)
Live Bands: BOOM BOOM KID, JESU, N.N., NEEDLES, SUNNO)))

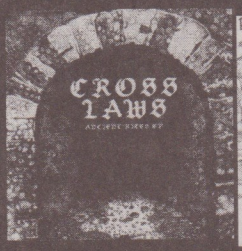
Will Kinser

New Releases:
PIOGGIA NERA - "Teatri di Menzogne" LP (Nuclear Chaos)
EL BANDA - "Przejdzie Ci El Banda" LP (Pasazer/Trujaca Fala)
LIMB FROM LIMB - "Death, Famine, Plague" LP (No Options)
THE RESTARTS - "Outsider" LP (self-released)
HORROR - "Descontrolas" 12" (Grita O Muere)
TOTALITÄR - "Vi Är Eliten" LP EP (Prank)
BOMBENALARM - "No Mistakes" LP (Hate)
CROW - "Hametsu No Haoto" 12" (Crow)
LA PIOVRA - "L'Ultima Sigaretta" LP (Agipunk)
BEHIND ENEMY LINES - "One Nation Under the Iron Fist of God" LP (Profane Existence)

Reissues:
IMPERIALIST PIGS - "Cork Screw Pork Sword" EP (Discourage)
DESTRUCTIONS - "Complete Destruction" LP (Hardcore Holocaust/Hohnie)
CHRIST ON PARADE - "Sounds Of Nature" LP (Prank)
LAST RIGHTS - "No Guts, No Glory" 12" (Reflex)
YOUNG WASTERNERS - "We Got Ways" LP (Hjernespind)
OHL - "Verbrannte Erade" LP (bootleg)
LIBERTY - "The People Who Care are Angry" LP (Get Back)
DRONGOS FOR EUROPE - "Death's a Career" LP (Pure Punk)
TDK - "Esto es Una Empresa Capitalista" LP (Munster)
BASTARD - "Wind of Pain" LP (bootleg)

Live Bands:
THE KIDS / LA FRACTION - Austin, USA
HIBERNATION - Thessaloniki, Greece
FLUX OF THE PINK INDIANS / DEVIATED INSTINCT - London, UK
LOS MONJO / ANTIMASTER - Mexico D.F.
PISSCHRIST - Santa Ana, USA
LA PIOVRA - Berkeley, USA
SKITKIDS - Alborg, Denmark
PIOGGIA NERA - Cesena, Italy
KIM PHUK - Pittsburg, USA
POISON IDEA - San Francisco, California





Chris Hubbard

For some reason, this time around, I thought I'd have a hard time finding enough releases that I liked from 2007 to include in this list. But, as always seems to happen, when it comes down to it, I have trouble narrowing the picks down to just ten. After much deliberation, I came up with this selection-nice and well-rounded, with some longtime classics, some new favorites, and a couple out-of-the-blue surprises. I suggest tracking down them all!

Top Ten Records:

1. TOTALITÄR - "Vi Är Eliten" LP (Prank)
I remember reading somewhere online some old (circa '81) review of DISCHARGE's *Why* 12" where like half the thing was about the ten-second blast of noise that opens up the record. Well, TOTALITÄR's third and final full-length LP offers the perfect update on that groundbreaking record's intro-a concentrated, two-second barrage that kicks right into a signature TOTALITÄR riff, as if to say, "wake up, fuckers!" The rest of the album, like their previous two, of course, is flawless. No contest here for the best release of 2007.

2. COMPLICATIONS - "Blinded/ Coffin" (Feral Ward)
A great single-the only downside I can think of is that it's only two songs. I hear they're coming out with a full-length LP soon? And maybe a vinyl version of their 2004 demo? Can't wait.

3. SEX VID - "Tania" EP (Dom America)
Yeah, yeah, some of you are probably sick of hearing *MRR* go on about this band… This EP's a classic though, no denying it. The title track, their best song on record (so far), is a one-riff tune with a sick, lurching rhythm-makes me think of someone trying to drag a body after some horrible incident, nervous and rushed, barely able to keep from collapsing under the weight…

4. TRANZMITORS - "We're All Alone With You/Between Planets" (Seeing Eye)
The TRANZMITORS go full-on pop for this single-my favorite thing they've put out. The A-side is the band's (tasteful) homage to the BOYS ("First Time" meets "Brickfield Nights"?), the flip is a killer JESUS AND MARY CHAIN cover (coincidentally, not the only punk band to cover this song in 2007). I *really* hope they continue in this direction-sure, they risk going too far and turning absolute shit, but if they could pull it off…

5. LA FRACTION - "La Vie Revée" LP (Feral Ward)
A great deal of my love of this band comes from seeing them live for the first time at ABC No Rio in 2003-my friend made a recording of the set and I used to listen to it all the time before I even heard them on record. While I still prefer their previous LP, *Aussi Long Sera Le Chemin*, this latest one is damn good and well worth picking up.

6. ECOLI - "Big Stupid Ape" EP (Stress Domain)
In my review of this a couple months ago, I neglected to compare ECOLI to any other bands-however when playing this record at the house recently, Martin pointed out the fact that some of the songs actually sound like KORO, and I can't help but agree. Yeah, KORO! (Even to the point where you've got to wonder if they purposefully sped up the recording!) Either way, this is a totally ripping EP.

7. SURRENDER - "Last White Flag" EP (self-released)
My favorite Bay Area band at the moment-every time I see them play, it seems like they've written half a set's worth of new songs. This, their debut, has only three, but the title track is a total anthem. I am quite sure that these folks will do some extensive touring in the future (and I'll just say it now, guys-if you need a roadie…), so do yourself a favor and *don't* miss 'em when you have the chance.

8. CROSS LAWS - "Behind the Curve" EP (self-released)
The woefully limited (I don't even have a copy) debut from this short-lived North Carolina hardcore band. Songwriting and production clearly recall the greats of early-'80s US hardcore, and this five-track EP is delivered with that extra, essential bit of intensity that pushes a good record into the "great" category. The second-to-last song bleeds into the last one with this weirdly-reverbed guitar chord that for some reason is really cool and distinctive-gets me every time I listen to it.

9. REPERCUSSIONS - "Eleven Songs" 12" (540)
Given the "ex-members of" expectations, REPERCUSSIONS had high standards to live up to before I even heard them-standards they easily met with this killer debut 12" EP. And the cover even "borrows" art from an old Maximum Rocknroll Records release!

10. OUT WITH A BANG - "Few Beers Left But Out of Drugs" EP (Criminal IQ) and "I Love My Life" EP (Fashionable Idiots)
Two EP's worth of catchy riffs and ugly attitudes from this now-defunct Italian band. I guess you can now say they lived up to their name? Wish I could've seen 'em on their US tour last year…

Top Five Reissues:

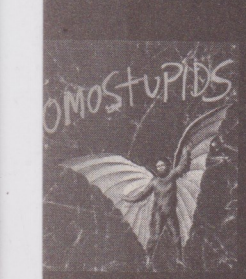
1. BARN AV REGNBUEN - "Folk Uten Framtid" LP (Cradle to Grave)
I wrote about this LP-which compiles the complete recorded works of this early Norwegian HC band-in one of my columns. An unrelenting blast of crazy, fuzzed-out punk, mostly played at top speed, but never sacrificing a keen sense of melody. Highly recommended!

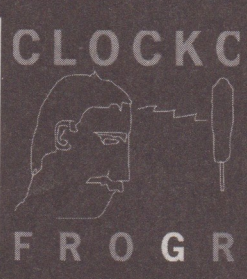
2. NUMBSKULL - "Final Days of Torture" LP (My Mind's Eye)
Mid-'80s demo release by a Cleveland bass-drums-vocals trio. This one took a little bit of time for me to really dig, but now I fucking love it. It's like they've got the attitude/approach of FLIPPER, but their songs (well, a good half of them) are actually really catchy. Some of the lyrics are dumb as shit, but the delivery is so deadpan that it doesn't really matter.

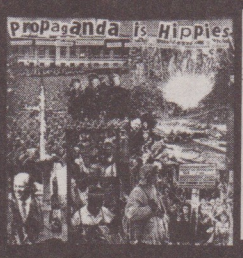
3. TALK IS POISON - "Condensed Humanity" LP (Prank)
Well-deserved and nicely executed reissue of one of the best hardcore bands of the late-'90s (or from any era, for that matter). This band can do no wrong in my eyes, and hopefully we haven't heard the last from them!

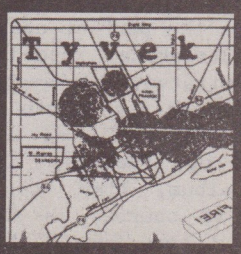
4. PYLON - "Gyrate" CD (DFA)
The cover of this CD reminded me of all the times I saw their *Gyrate* LP (originally released in 1980) in various dollar-bins. I'd always assumed it was bad '80s rock, but now I wish I'd picked it up… PYLON played cool, female-fronted post-punk/new wave that sounded like a cross between GANG OF FOUR and the B-52'S. This reissue is well-done and includes their LP, first single, and 10" EP, plus photos and liner notes.

5. V/A - "All Your Ears Can Hear" 2xCD (AYECH International)
This is an excellent and amazingly comprehensive collection of material from Victoria, British Columbia from 1978-1984, covering lo-fi hardcore thrash to new wave pop (and everything in between)-and it comes with an 80-page book with hundreds of photos and flyers and a ton of writing on the bands and the scene. Lovingly and painstakingly assembled, *All Your Ears Can Hear* is the epitome of great historical punk documentation.









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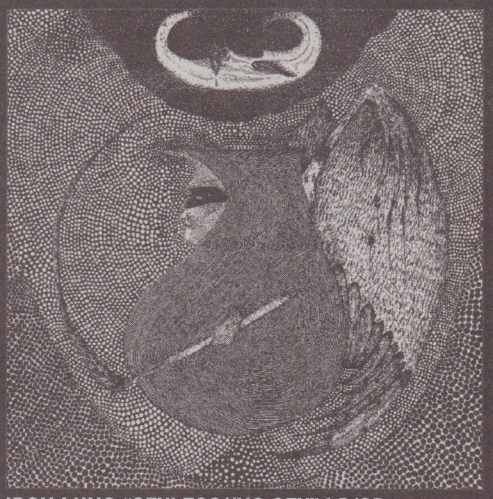

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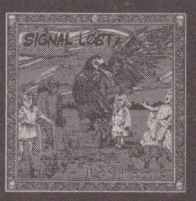

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AUTISTIC YOUTH

Autistic Youth was interviewed by Cissie Scurlock and Scott Moore. Photos by George Boe.

MRR: To start off, tell us what you do in the band.

Adam: I play guitar and sing.
Alex: I sing and play guitar.
Seve: I play drums.
Nick: I play bass.

MRR: How did Autistic Youth come together? Were you guys all friends before the band started?

Adam: Me, Seve, and Alex went to high school together in a suburb. Me and Seve have known each other since we were 12 and 13, through school pretty much.

Alex: We started when Adam and I met four years ago. We were both interested in starting a band. Another band that Seve and I were in had just broken up.

MRR: How did Nick get involved?

Alex: Nick replaced the other Nick that dropped out of the band.
Adam: There was a Nick Powell for a while that played bass on the first CD.
Seve: We used to go to Diskords shows so we asked him to play bass.
Nick: I wanted to join pretty bad because I liked the band and I didn't know it would last so long at all. I thought we wouldn't do anything.

MRR: So you played bass in the Diskords. Were you doing the Diskords at the same time as this band?
Nick: They overlapped for maybe half a year.

MRR: When the band began, what sort of mental picture did you have that you wanted the band to be?
Alex: The first idea was to have a really shitty band.
Seve: We succeeded. You guys had a drum machine.
Alex: We had a drum machine that was named Carby Dash, and me and Adam on guitars. We had a four-song demo recorded like this.
Adam: And it sounded awful.

MRR: How did it end up becoming more serious?
Adam: I don't know, I think then we wanted to play shows to 15-year-old skinheads or something. We just stayed together long enough and grew musically together. We heard new bands and new music.

MRR: Were there things in particular that influenced you?
Adam: I think a lot of the shit going on in Portland at the time. We were first into the scene when the Observers were first getting big and I got that No Hope for the Kids record around the same time and that influenced me a bunch. No Hope for the Kids played Portland and that was a fucking amazing show. They're so fucking good.

MRR: How did you guys decide on the name Autistic Youth? I've heard that there have been negative reactions based on the name. Do you want to talk about the feedback?
Adam: We started—Me and Alex after that shitty sounding band—we went to school with this autistic kid and he was a friend of ours and he was really, really punk. His name was Eric Anarchy. He plays music in Portland and plays shows and he wanted to start a band with us. Alex thought of the name Autistic Youth and Eric was really into it. We practiced with him like once.
Alex: We were trying to cover "Blitzkrieg Bop" but we were playing the music to "Forming" underneath and he was singing "Blitzkrieg Bop" over the top. We have a recording of that session somewhere but I don't know where it is.

MRR: So what about the negative reactions?
Adam: It was six to eight months ago and it started getting really bad. I don't know if it's because people started knowing who we are or something.
Nick: It wasn't for that long, we got shit for about a month and then we cleared it up.
Adam: We played a show with This Bike Is a Pipe Bomb and somebody put a sign above a big monkey that said "Autistic Youth: Please explain your name?" We didn't really know what to do.

MRR: Did you explain your name?
Alex: We took down the sign and I wrote the explanation for where the name came from. I told him about Eric and got my response from him, then I put the sign back up.
Seve: Actually, last night this drunk guy at the Long Beach show told us, "Are you guys autistic?" and I was like, "No" and he said, "Well my friend said if you weren't autistic he was gonna beat your ass."
Adam: He said he was going to bring a knife to the show. It just kept on getting more ridiculous that night as people kept getting drunker.

MRR: So how do you guys feel people reacting negatively towards your name?
Adam: I think people are just looking for something to be pissed about.
Seve: It's such a long story you just kinda have to trust me that we aren't being offensive.
Alex: It wouldn't be that good of an offensive name.
Seve: Yeah, it'd be a pretty bad offensive name.
Adam: Who wants to pick on autistic children? Right around that This Bike Is a Pipe Bomb show somebody got really mad that we did an interview for a weekly in Portland and sent us an email regarding that interview. It was really prolific, like three pages long. He grew up taking care of his younger brother who was autistic and he was really offended by our name. He thought we should change it or explain it. He was just super offended and sent this letter to the Autism Society and us.

MRR: Were you ever contacted by the Autism Society?
Adam: No, but I mean, it's not really the society against the defamation of autism.
Seve: Adam wrote a really good email back to the guy, describing the band. And the dude sent one back just saying, "I'm sorry, I should have looked into it."

MRR: I've noticed that, in addition to you guys, Portland has a large scene of young DIY bands. Do you think there is a reason for young folks being drawn to punk in Portland or is it purely accidental?
Alex: There are a lot of supportive people that really like to help young bands that are just starting out. Colin (Observers, Defect Defect, etc.) is really big on that. He got us our first show and got us on pretty fun shows when we were just starting. I think the fact that there are a lot of young bands around makes it a lot more accessible.
Nick: They keep on getting younger and younger.
Seve: Everyone receives help at some point when they are first starting out and I think everyone just sort of passes it on.
Adam: I think the fact that people we were so supportive of us when we were so young—even just going to shows, you know? We got fucked with sometimes when we were first going to shows and you would get called mall-core or something like that.

"EVERY YEAR THERE IS A NEW

Seve: Cell phone punks.

Adam: But after three months of going to shows people were really supportive of us. All the kid bands in town are fucking awesome.

Seve: Every year there is a new wave of younger kids.

MRR: What are some of the younger bands?

Alex: Ethiopian Children just broke up but they were really good.

Adam: My favorite was Moral Panic. They fucking rule. They kinda sound like Necros a little bit. Although I'm sure they've never heard of the Necros. Ogo Pogo is pretty tight.

Alex: There's a bunch of funny ones like Pocket Size Surgeon and Monster Size Monsters. The Tramps were good. They share a lot of members and they're all friends...I think they're gonna get really good.

MRR: Have you noticed the vibe between the younger and older scene in Portland?

Alex: There always is...it's just hard to hang out that in depth with someone you didn't come up with.

Seve: Sometimes it's really divided age-wise in Portland—look around at a show and it's the 15-year olds, 19-year olds, and so on.

MRR: Everyone goes to the shows but the bands don't necessarily play the same shows?

Adam: No, they kind of do.

Alex: I think that there's been a big effort to put younger bands on shows with more established bands.

Adam: Criminal Damage will play with Moral Panic. You go to shows and there's like 15-year-olds to 40-year-olds there and I think that's rad. No one's picking on the 15-year-olds and the 15-year-olds aren't picking on the 40-year-olds.

MRR: Are there any cool venues?

Adam: In Portland?

Nick: It comes and goes.

Alex: It's mostly houses. The Satyricon is a venue but it's hard to work with a venue because you have to pay them. You have the responsibility to make money.

MRR: Are there regular houses that have shows?

Seve: They come up and go too fast right now. There's a lot of pressure from the OLCC to not have drinking at shows. I think some music journalists exposed a lot of the underage drinking at shows.

Adam: Yeah, the weekly in Portland tried to act like they found out about basement shows. Like it's like this brand new idea.

Nick: That article caused some houses to stop doing shows.

MRR: How do you guys feel about these kind of people coming in and latching onto the subculture and punk, 'cause that happened in Portland where they wrote about these shows and there was more exposure for what was going on. Things got shut down and cops started finding out about shows?

Seve: It's kind of exposing what we have. Why throw it in the media? Why throw it in the weekly?

Adam: Yeah, because it totally operates outside of society and it has no place in the weekly.

Seve: Like a hip weekly in Portland. It just fucks everything up.

Alex: It exploited the trust between people that came to shows and stuff because people would talk to the reporters then the reporters would print what was said in the weekly.

Seve: Yeah, you totally learned you can't say certain things to specific people.

Nick: They will kind of take stuff out of context...

Seve: They try to make it sound more juicy.

Adam: We try to do more basement shows. Like two or three years ago there were a lot of venues in Portland. There were probably like three or four. They were totally affordable, like $50 to rent out. These spaces were rad but they are gone now because they didn't really make any money. It was kind of like basement shows out of necessity because everybody lives at house, so you can do a show in your living room or something. When the weekly acts like there is this whole neat subculture with shows going on; it fucks it up so now we can't do shows.

Alex: The thing is that the indie shows, they can start at ten at night because they are so quiet. At basement shows, everyone's drinking in the yard and being kind of rowdy. I just get pissed off when that happens.

Adam: It feels like this effort to keep it out of the newspapers and to keep it a secret, which is hard because there are a lot of shows. It's kind of a bummer, but this summer a ton of new houses started doing shows. So it's cool.

Seve: But they are already gone.

MRR: Your new 7" is on Black Water Records—how did that come about? It seems a little out of ordinary for that label. Do you feel like you fit in?

Nick: Absolute Rulers did a tour last March and Keith filled in for us. Previously we had a European label that planned to put out stuff for us, and then at the last minute he just bailed because he couldn't afford it. So we were kind lost label-wise. While Keith was on the tour with Absolute Rulers, I was talking to him about it a little bit. I didn't think he would be into it at all but he said, "Yeah, that seems like it would be a good idea." We kept talking to him after we got back and it worked out.

Seve: He's been great. He's been awesome.

Alex: He's a really nice guy.

Adam: I don't think we really fit in now, but he is putting out his band, The Estranged, next. They're more of a melodic punk band. He's doing a Portland compilation with Sleepwalkers RIP, The Estranged, and Nix, so I think he's getting more into straightforward punk. I'm sure he'll keep doing these kinds of records.

WAVE OF YOUNGER KIDS."

MRR: A lot of your lyrics touch on fucked up situations, but they also have an optimistic tone, so I'm assuming have some faith in the future of the world. How important are the lyrics to you guys and what kind of impact do you think a band's lyrics can have on people?

Adam: As far as impact on people...making people think about how to live their lives. A lot of the lyrics I write are about things I see around the world that make me mad. Sometimes it might seem kind of vague to people. On the new 7" one of the songs is about the really nice neighborhood I grew up, which is in the suburbs. Our alarm was always on, and there were gated communities everywhere with no crime. So one of those songs is just about the unnecessary illusion of safety. People are just afraid but they live out in the suburbs. I don't know...fear from the media, radio, television, and newspapers and how that makes me mad. I guess, try to impact people to think about how they live their lives.

Alex: We usually write lyrics after we write the music.

Seve: We spend way too much time on the music.

MRR: Is there a particular song that you think embodies any sort of statement or overall vision that you have for the band?

Nick: I don't think we've written it yet. (laughter)

Seve: That's true.

Alex: The song "Deadbeat." I think the lyrics are the most personal.

Adam: Would you guys agree?

All: Yeah.

MRR: What is it about?

Adam: It's about my relationship with my dad or lack thereof–him going to jail and how I dealt with it. It's coming out on a split with the Estranged. It's just about my relationship with my father. We spent a lot of time writing it musically too.

Nick: Not that his relationship with his father is what our band is about but the band's lyrics are pretty personal, I feel like, and some of them are pretty topical as well.

MRR: So you guys are all at the point where all your friends are starting to drop out of punk for careers, boring normalcy, techno, etc. Do you see punk as a lasting part of your life?

Nick: Actually, yeah.

Seve: Punk for life.

Adam: Hardcore, live it or leave it.

Seve: Yeah, always.

Adam: I don't ever see being happy if I did that–I see being fucking miserable.

MRR: You've been a pretty active band over the last couple of years, putting out records and going on tour. Are you happy with what the band's done?

Adam: Yeah, it's been great.

Alex: It's exactly what we hope it could be. Going to new places and playing shows, that's what I want to do–see bands.

Adam: Just working as little as possible to not have to work as long as possible.

MRR: What has been the most memorable show on this tour?

Alex: On this tour, Bakersfield was really memorable. We swore two years ago, on our first tour, that we'd never play there again because we played at the Mint and it was really horrible. It was this bar...

Adam: A biker bar in Bakersfield–it was the worst show.

Alex: This time we played with the Contaminators and Loser Life. It was a really fun show inside a house and we ended up hanging out at the Mint

Seve: We went back to the biker bar that we swore we'd never go back to.

Adam: There were just tons of kids.

Seve: I was really surprised by the Bakersfield show.

Adam: Yeah, they have a really cool scene going on. You always hear about shows at the gym there that are supposed to be really cool.

Seve: The boxing ring.

Adam: But this was awesome too.

Seve: That Gilman show with the Abi Yo-Yo's was one of my favorites too.

MRR: You did a long US tour last summer, how did that go? What is your opinion on the state of the national punk scene?

Adam: It was great. It's pretty alive and kicking.

Alex: Even the small towns are pretty fun. I love playing small towns

Nick: Yeah, Bowling Green because they have nothing to do, so they go crazy for any band.

Seve: Cleveland sucked though. That was the only show that was actually, like, there were two people, nobody came.

MRR: In general, what do you enjoy about touring?

Nick: Everything...and getting to know my bandmates better.

Adam: Yeah, I enjoy everything.

Adam: Getting to see bands that you wouldn't otherwise get to see.

Seve: Seeing bands in their own environment...seeing Loser Life when we played with them in Austin was cool, but seeing them in Bakersfield–kids went fucking crazy.

Adam: You get to see what a city looks like through the punk scene.

Seve: That's the best part about touring...when you go to another city with your family, you stay at a hotel and you go eat at a nice restaurant or something. You don't feel the city as if you were just there for a night with a friend to show you around, and usually you'll have a great time.

Adam: Yeah, you get to see things like, "this is where the celebrity got shot" or, "this is the good vegan cheese steak place" and all that. That's the shit I want to see.

Seve: Smoke a blunt in front of the Mormon Temple.

Nick: When we were in Salt Lake City we were walking around and Adam and our friend Jake pissed on Brigham Young's grave and we

thought we were really punk. We jumped the fence even though no one was there–it was like one in the morning and we were like *go, go!*
Alex: Tagging anarchy signs on the way back.

MRR: What other bands and projects are you in?
Adam: I'm in Defect Defect. We're going to Brazil in January and that'll be pretty rad. We're doing a split with a Brazilian band, Buzz Cups. It's gonna be awesome.
Alex: Me and Nick are in the Bustling Townships.
Seve: Me and Andre (Autistic Youth roadie) are in PRF. We're not doing much right now. We're also in this band where Andre sings in Portuguese–Não Cura.
Nick: I'm in Bustling Townships with Alex and a band called The Ghost Face Is Two Inches From Your Own Face.

MRR: What other plans do you have for the band?
Seve: Another LP coming out in a bit and another split, which we're working on writing. A German label is pressing our last LP.

MRR: Which label?
Adam: This new label called Taken By Surprise and it's a split release with Sabotage. We're gonna do a European tour in June.

MRR: Do you want to give a short little discography?
Adam: We did the *Lost Boys* CD on Blindspot, *Banned from the Roseland* 7" on Blindspot.

MRR: We're you really banned from the Roseland?
Alex: I was kicked out for being too drunk at the Circle Jerks show.
Seve: It's a pretty shitty song anyway.
Adam: *Landmine Beach* LP on Johnny Cat, and *Empty Eyes* 7" on Black Water.
Alex: Oh and *Landmine Beach* tape on Break in Your House and Take Everything You Got.
Seve: We have two new 7"s that are coming out–the split with The Estranged and the four band comp, both on Black Water.
Alex: We're going be part of a singles series on Rock Bottom. That will come out sometime next year.

MRR: That's all we got. Last words?
Seve: Let's smoke a bowl.

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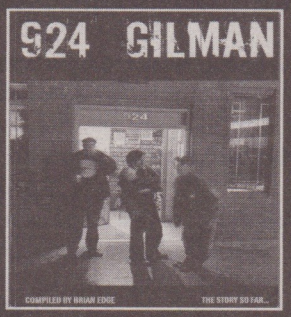
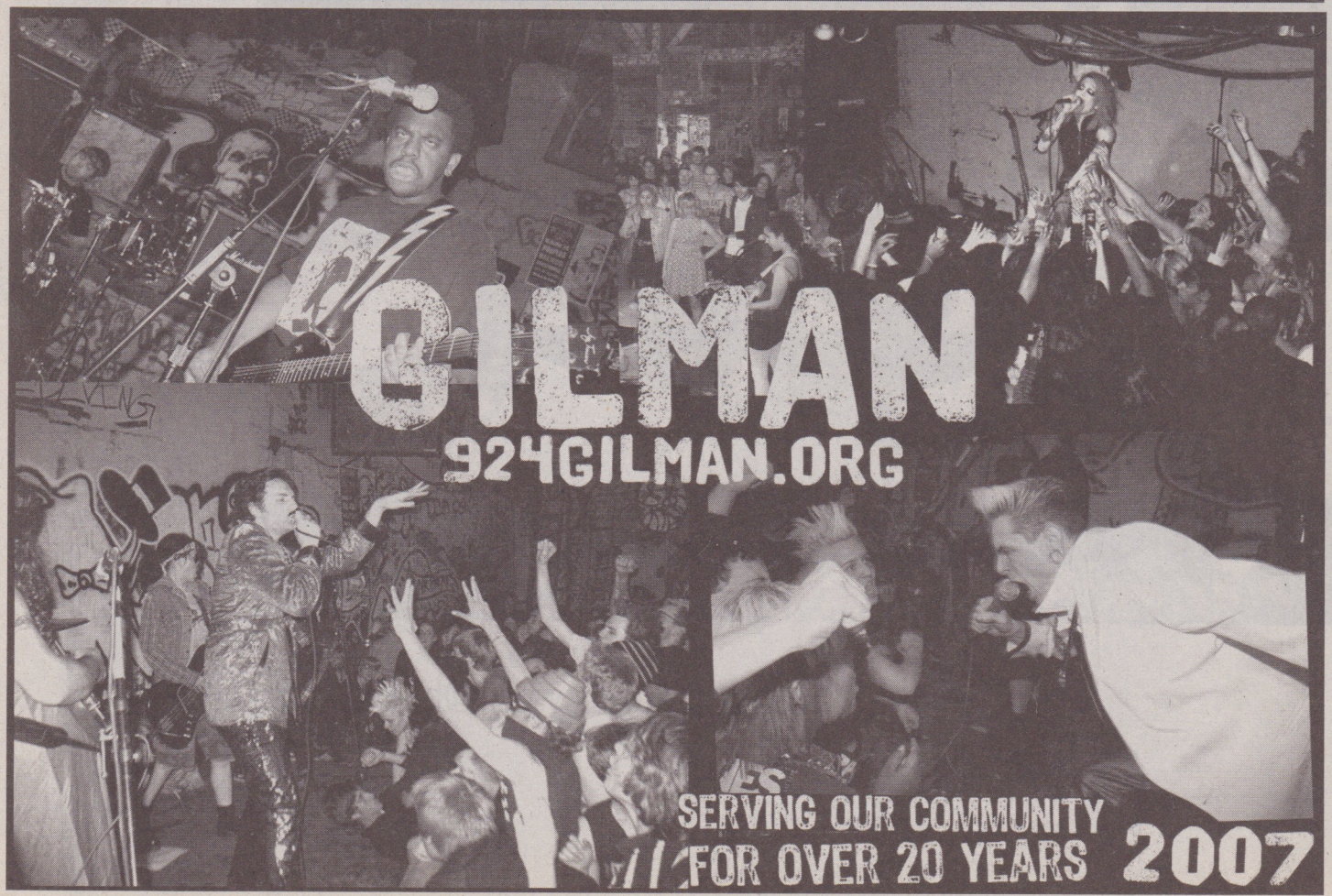


"The best thing that Gilman does is to bring people together. It provides a social gathering place, and even more importantly, it provides a place for people to meet new people. When people go to Gilman, they know that they will be at a space that doesn't tolerate sexism, homophobia, and racism. They see other people that reject the notion that you have to live a passive, normal, boring life. They meet people that are working for what they believe in: volunteering to support and keep alive a place that represents so many of the ideals that all of us have, but aren't represented in mainstream society. Even if someone goes to a show at Gilman and doesn't talk to anyone else, they can still feel closer to the whole group of people, and a sense of community can grow." -- Joe G. '01 (excerpt from 924 Gilman book)



White Lung

White Lung has been on hiatus for too long. And now, finally, they will be reuniting and returning to your favorite smoky, beer-soaked bar or art space to scorch your ears and ignite the most dense thrashing since the last Fang tribute night. They've been up to sweet fuck-all in the last six months while their lead singer was gallivanting about in Europe, but the members of White Lung are poised to make up for lost time. I asked Mish (vocals), Grady (bass), Anne Marie (drums), and Natasha (guitars) some questions about Vancouver punk music, the new record and their well-known antics.

Interview by Braaad MacKinnon. Photos by Steve Louie and Jason Fisher

MRR: How long has White Lung been a band?
Mish: Since September 2006. We played our first show with Channels 3&4 and Vapid, I think, and we did like four fucking songs and one was a goddamn cover. So, we were not ready. I pushed them into it.

MRR: How did the band evolve? Were you all friends? What's the story?
Grady: The true, boring answer? I played in a band with Natasha who played in a band with Anne Marie. A girl I worked with asked me to play bass in her band and Mish was their guitarist. Then Mish met Anne Marie when they played a one-off show together in a cover band, and became Best Friends Forever. The three of us decided to get together to jam. I asked Natasha to join us because she's rad. She did. Mish named us. And so began White Lung…
Mish: So, we were friends before, but not like four girls who one day, while drinking kool-aid after school, vowed to form a rock band.

MRR: Mish will be returning early next year. What are your upcoming plans?
Mish: Get shit done. Put out more records. Tour. We have been getting many offers, but in the long run, for us, it's just about getting our act together and making it happen.

MRR: Rumor has it that Deranged Records wants to release your next album. How did that happen?
Anne Marie: Gord from Deranged saw as play with Career Suicide and liked us, and he also liked our EP on Hockey Dad, so he asked if maybe we would like to put something out on Deranged. We'll probably do another 7" to start.

MRR: Has White Lung been active since Mish temporarily fucked off?
Anne Marie: We've just started practicing without her so that we have new stuff ready when she gets back.

MRR: The EP is getting some great reviews, critically and commercially. Are you surprised?
Mish: It is always a pleasant surprise to have people like your music, and truthfully, it is very hard to listen to yourself from a position of disembodiment. So, it's nice to hear people's opinions and not just our friends who have to be nice. Ryan, from Hockey Dad Records, has been so supportive of us and we really owe all the exposure to him.
Anne Marie: I'm pretty surprised because we recorded it so quickly and we couldn't even hear each other when we were doing it. I totally thought the recording wouldn't even be usable, so it's awesome that it worked out.

MRR: How punk is White Lung?
Anne Marie: Punk as fuck.
Grady: I remember a little group of gutter-punks didn't want us to play at their house party because we were one of those, and I quote, "hipster bands." So not very, apparently.

MRR: What's your best White Lung story?
Grady: I'll defer that to Mish. She always remembers the weirdest, most random shit

and makes it sound a million times funnier than it was when it actually happened.
Mish: I don't know which is the best…there is an infamous video of us all fighting backstage at a show because I wanted everyone to take a group photo and I'm running around like a headless chicken screaming at Grady to come be in the picture and she tells me to "get lost," Natasha is just laughing at us, and Anne Marie tries to karate kick me while she screams, 'I am sweating!! I'm sweating!" You can watch the video on YouTube and it pretty much sums up our dynamic: me yelling and everyone else walking away, laughing. And the photo turned out horrible, by the way, we look like a bunch of D-list cheerleaders.

MRR: Your live shows are a hybrid of theatrical performance and rad music? Why do you always get so fucking drunk before you play? Do you practice drunk or is this just some kind of pre-show ritual?
Grady: Again, I'll leave that to "McWasted" on the mic. Don't ask me how she can flail around like that without barfing all over everyone.
Mish: I get anxious. It's not my best quality, you know, my drunken behavior, but it makes for an interesting stage performance and I become numb to physical pain.
Anne Marie: We get drunk because the shows we always play are like parties. All of our friends are there having a good time, so we just like to get wasted and have fun too. Often times though we get too drunk before we play. There have been many times when I couldn't even tell if I was playing in time or not.

MRR: Is there a family dynamic in White Lung?
Anne Marie: Not really....I think we all act like children.

MRR: Why don't you own a van? Can any of you even drive? Seems to me your friends are always driving you guys to and from your shows?
Mish: Do you want some gas money? Come on....
Anne Marie: Natasha, and myself drive, and Mish refuses to because of previous "car accidents." We don't own a van because we aren't rich and because we haven't toured yet, so we don't really have a need for one. It's way better for us to get driven to and from shows because it's fun to be chauffeured around. Plus, this way we can get as drunk as we want.

MRR: More seriously, a couple of reviews of the song "Amy White Out" have confused the title with "Amy Winehouse," implying that the lyrics are inspired by her well-covered transgression. Why do you love Amy Winehouse so much?
Mish: Alright, "Amy White Out" is the song title and it is based on the fabulous life of my friend Amy White who is worth writing songs about. I do not know Amy Winehouse well enough to write a song about her, plus I am sure there are a bunch of high-school boy bands in London that have already done it.

MRR: Mish, reviews keep comparing you to Kathleen Hanna. For me, you sound more like Kate Bush... Nevertheless, where do you stand on such comparisons?
Mish: This is just the way media circles work. People understand associations. I am a girl, so they need to find some other semi-well known girl who sings like me and boom—Kathleen. Perfect. She carries a mic and sings loud. OK. Easy.

MRR: The media has labeled White Lung as neo-riot grrl punk. How do you feel about this label? Has riot grrl inspired you at all?
Mish: Personally, I think that when we are associated with riot-grrl, it is purely based on music and not politics. I was inspired by riot-grrl; it was an essential movement that helped women create space for themselves within the punk scene, and not spaces where they were forced to assimilate to the popular, but were able to create there own rules. And they got shit on for this by a lot of people. We play loud, aggressive and, the major association factor, we are all women. But stylistically and lyrically, we are not riot grrls. I think riot grrls were activists who had to fight. We don't need to fight for space because Patti, Kat, Tobi and Kim did it for us. And we should be grateful for this. We just want to work hard at making intelligent, creative punk music.

Grady: Ha! "Neo-Riot Grrrl Punk"? Really? Wow. I'm gonna give the pat answer: We're all girls, and playing the type of music we do, people are gonna compare us to those bands coz it's easy. If we were men playing the exact same songs, I don't think we'd really get those comparisons as much, if at all. At this point we've been compared to every female-fronted punk band *ever*, which is fine. That music was kind of inescapable at the time, but I would listen to a lot of other shit before I'd listen to "Riot Grrl" bands. So I wouldn't say inspired is the right word. There was a lot of it I couldn't fucking stand.

MRR: White Lung seems to fit in well in the underground punk scene of Vancouver. Vancouver is doing epic shit. What bands are you listening to? What do you think about Vancouver as a music scene?
Mish: I love Petroluem By-Products, which is a teen band in Vancouver who are so sexy and saracastic. B-Lines are probably the most exciting band. And I guess a Bison show is good too, I mean, if nothing else is going on and you can stand watching a bunch of douchebags masturbate with their instruments for like two hours…despite all that, they are very, very talented, hot dudes.
Anne Marie: And we love VAPID!
Grady: I like the Petroleum By-Products a lot too. This city is getting a lot better in terms of the variety of music coming out that people are actually going to see.

MRR: Name the best song ever. Right now. Go.
Mish: The Replacements, "Kiss Me On The Bus"
Anne Marie: Fang, "The Money Will Roll Right In"
Grady: The Ronettes, "Be My Baby." I'm a geek, and I accept this.

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an interview with Sharon Cheslow

I wanted to interview Sharon Cheslow because of the longevity and integrity of her involvement in underground culture. She has remained connected to underground music for close to 30 years, starting out playing guitar for DC's first all girl punk band, Chalk Circle, in 1981, then playing with the No Wave group Bloody Mannequin Orchestra. She was involved in the early '90s DC Riot Grrrl scene; her band Suture featured Kathleen Hanna of Bikini Kill. Her current involvement in underground noise/art includes collaborations with musicians like the Yellow Swans and Elisa from Magik Markers, as well as numerous solo projects and performances. In 2006 and 2007 she presented the Coterie Exchange sound event Sonic Triptych in Oakland, Los Angeles, and New York. The New York version was a collaboration with filmmaker/video artist James Schneider. Sonic Triptych first premiered in San Francisco in 2002 with nine women, including members of Erase Errata. She is also a writer and publishes the fanzine Interrobang?!, *which included her comprehensive list of women in late '70s punk. (Available and constantly updated on her website: mindspring.com/~acheslow/AuntMary/bang/wip.html)*

She was an integral part of the early DC punk and hardcore scene, and was a true punk in the sense that not only was she in a band but she was also an important part of the scene in other respects. Perhaps her most renowned contribution is the Banned in DC *book, one of the first and most important attempts at documenting a regional hardcore scene.*

Introduction and interview by Layla Gibbon

MRR: Where did you grow up and how do you think it affected what you do?

There are two parts to this answer because I grew up in two places: first in Los Angeles until I was six and then in the Washington, DC suburbs.

I was born in Los Angeles in 1961 and I was exposed to all the great folk and rock and roll that was happening in the '60s. It was in the air—on the car radios, in the stores. My parents liked folk and jazz and some rock and always had music around the house. My dad listened to records a lot and my mom liked to sing. I found out recently that my parents went to hootenannies while in LA and went to one in the late '50s; Idyllwild, CA with Pete Seeger and Sonny Terry and Brownie McGee. They saw Dylan in '64 at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium. So their love of music was passed on to me, especially protest music.

We lived in a bunch of LA neighborhoods, but the one I remember most was an ethnic, artsy area near the Wilshire/Fairfax Jewish area. We lived there a couple of years. At that time, the Holocaust was still very fresh in peoples' minds and there were a lot of survivors in LA. I remember my mom took me to the Jewish grocery store and one of the clerk's arms had a number tattoo. I asked my mom about it and she explained that the woman had survived the concentration camps. You don't really see this outside of cities like LA and NY and a lot of the survivors have died, so it's not even that common anymore. It really had a deep affect on me. I heard the phrase "never again" a lot, which meant that each individual had a

responsibility to make sure that nothing like the Holocaust ever happened again.

Because of the legacy of the Holocaust, my mother made sure I was raised within a Jewish community. So most of the people I knew in LA were Jews. I was very dark-skinned and one time at the beach a kid called me a nigger. When I asked my mom about it, she told me it was a racist word for blacks. My parents were pro-civil rights. My mother went to hear Martin Luther King, Jr. speak at UCLA, where she'd graduated college, and took me with her. I was too young to remember it consciously, but it entered my mind. It would have been around '65.

We moved to the East Coast in late '67 after both my mother's parents died and my father got a job with the Department of Transportation in DC. We lived in Silver Spring, Maryland for a year and then moved to Bethesda. Both were suburbs right outside DC. It was a huge culture shock because Jews comprised only 3% of kids in my school. Someone called me a kike and once again I had to ask my mom what the word meant and once again she had to teach me about racism. It left me feeling that I didn't fit in. I simply withdrew and focused on being happy on my own—I was into art, music, math, science and nature, so I was never bored. It was strange to go from a school with almost all Jewish kids to one with barely any. The kids thought I was weird enough being from LA and liking rock and roll! I couldn't find any kids in my elementary school that listened to rock until fifth grade and by that time I was listening to David Bowie! I was a Beatles fanatic and basically spent a lot of my free time in my bedroom listening to my Beatles records and playing Beatles songs on my guitar. I only found my rock friends after I performed in front of the entire fifth grade—singing and playing guitar, and a couple of people revealed they listened to rock too.

Chalk Circle — photo by Devon Babbler

Looking back I don't know why it was so weird to like rock and roll, other than that most of the kids in my school were raised very conservatively and very Christian and perhaps it was considered devil's music. I think another reason is that rock became equated with being anti-war and also pro-black. For my parents to be against the Vietnam War in LA was not a big deal. But I think things were more divisive in DC. My parents went to the opening of the movie *Hair* and someone drove by and egged them as they stood in front of the theater. It was politically motivated. I went to the Human Kindness Day concert in '75 with Stevie Wonder and a race riot broke out. It was a really crazy atmosphere. DC was just very, very conservative and paranoid and angry at that time. Nixon and Ford were presidents, and DC was dealing with the aftermath of Watergate, so that explains part of it.

MRR: How did you discover the underground/punk?

I found out about underground culture through reading about the Beatles in elementary school. I used to spend a lot of time in the neighborhood library looking up articles on the Beatles in the reference room. I discovered Yoko Ono that way. She opened up this whole world of avant-garde and experimental creativity to my young mind. Through her I discovered Fluxus and Warhol's Factory. A high school poetry teacher turned me on to the Beats. I was an avid music magazine reader and found out about the NY punk/CBGB scene in *Creem* and *Rock Scene* in 1975. When Patti Smith's *Horses* came out, I read a write up in the *Washington Post*. In 1976 I started listening to WGTB, a free-form radio station out of Georgetown University, and first heard NY Dolls and Patti Smith. That same year my family took a trip to NY to visit relatives and we walked around Greenwich Village. I saw all these punk-looking people and was instantly captivated. What's funny is that a high school friend of mine played me the Ramones when their first record came out and I remember I didn't like them at all! I liked the artier stuff.

The first NY punk band I saw live was Talking Heads in '78. Seeing Tina Weymouth play bass was magical. She was very reserved and petite on stage and it was the first time, except for seeing Linda McCartney perform with Wings, that I saw a woman playing in a band. I didn't like Talking Heads after their first couple of records, but that Talking Heads show is when I first started documenting what was going on through photography. I had a photography teacher in high school that encouraged my creative pursuits.

I'd have to say that it was the music magazines and fanzines that really exposed me to punk. They captured the ideas and energy through writing and photos. I found out about UK punk through reading *NME* and fanzines like *Sniffin' Glue*. I also loved LA and SF punk through reading *Slash*, *Search & Destroy*, and *Flipside*. These were available at Yesterday & Today Records, which opened in '77 in Rockville, Maryland about ten minutes from Bethesda. I had access to a lot of these publications through working there on and off from '79 to '82. Skip Groff, the owner, would go on trips and bring things back for me. I would read the zines as if looking for some secret code that would open up the world that matched what was in my imagination. It was really like that at that time. There was this sense of an entire new consciousness—a new sense of freedom, a new way of writing music and listening to it, a new way of looking at gender, a new way of creating community. I was stuck in suburban Bethesda, envisioning a scene in my area like the scenes I read about in the zines.

MRR: Was Chalk Circle your first band? How did you meet each other and what made you want to do a band? What were your influences—musical but also anything in a more abstract way? How did you fit in with the DC hardcore thing and were there any other bands that were your peers that were more arty/messed up that have disappeared to the sands of time? What was the best show you ever played?

Chalk Circle was my first band. I wrote songs with my best friend Stacy Taylor in junior high but we never played out. Aside from my fifth grade solo performance, I performed solo in high school for a Jewish youth group at my temple—doing a cover of the Kinks' "Lola" to shock them! This was before I'd ever heard the Raincoats version. I did it because I loved the way Patti Smith played with gender in her cover of *Gloria*.

Anne Bonafede, Chalk Circle's drummer, and I met each other through the small circle of DC punk kids that hung out at Madam's Organ shows and parties and record stores around late '79/early-'80. Some of the kids were friends through Wilson High School, a public DC school where most of the Teen Idles and Untouchables went. Anne went there with Jeff Nelson, Teen Idles' drummer, who was her boyfriend. I spent a lot of the spring of 1980 hanging out with Anne, Jeff, Nathan Strejcek, Henry Garfield, Ian and Alec MacKaye, Vivien Greene, Danny Ingram, Chery Celso, Bert Queiroz, and Eddie Janney. It was a great time. We all loved the Bad Brains. And we loved UK and California punk. I could tell that the community I'd envisioned in my head was happening in reality and that was very exciting.

Besides Yesterday & Today, we hung out in Georgetown where a lot of the DC punk kids worked. Two of DC's first punks, Danny Ingram and Bruce Buelken, worked there. Henry was manager at the Häagen-Dazs shop in Georgetown. If my memory is correct, Anne and Ian both worked at Häagen-Dazs for a while. Ian also worked at the Georgetown movie theater. So for a while, the DC punk scene was centered in Georgetown when we weren't at shows. Kids would spend a lot of time walking into various places to hang out with friends and people got to know each other that way. It's not the kind of place you'd expect punk kids to develop a community because it was a wealthy neighborhood with a lot of boutiques. But a lot of the DC punk kids grew up or went to school in Georgetown or nearby, and I guess it was easy to get jobs there. Some of the punk kids went to private high schools like Georgetown Day or Duke Ellington School of the Arts.

It was odd for me because part of my life was in Bethesda, part of it was at University of Maryland starting fall '79 and part of it was in DC. I discovered a lot about 20th century art movements once I got to college because I took a lot of art history classes. I switched majors a few times, but basically I studied art history, aesthetic theory, film studies, and English. I remember reading about Dada for one of my art history classes and thinking punk had a lot in common with it. I saw punk as more than just a style of music—I saw it as a lifestyle, a youth movement, and an art movement all in one. So I tried to read as much as I could about earlier cultural movements to get inspiration.

In '81 I bought the *Situationist International Anthology* as soon as it was published, and that had a huge influence on me. My film history professor was Robert Kolker, who taught independent and international cinema. His film classes were where I first learned about feminist theory. He used it to discuss films by Jean-Luc Godard, Maya Deren and Marguerite Duras. I found out recently that he graduated from Columbia University in 1969. Columbia at that time, along with colleges such as UC Berkeley, was a hotbed of radicalism. Students there were part of the New Leftist revolutionary time period, which involved a lot of Marxist and feminist though

Before Chalk Circle played out and had a name—which I took from Bertolt Brecht's *Caucasian Chalk Circle*—it consisted of me, Anne, and Cheryl in 1980. Cheryl was at all the punk shows and we thought she was cool because she lived by herself in a studio apartment in downtown DC and had a real job, so she didn't have any parents to answer to! Anne still lived at home and I lived at home when I wasn't living in my college dorm. Mitch Parker, who went on to Government Issue, wanted to play with us, but he wanted to call the band Mitch and his Bitches so we said no. Henry was almost in the band but he ended up doing SOA instead. Bert Queiroz from the Untouchables rehearsed with us for a bit. We didn't play out until 1981.

The main Chalk Circle lineup was Mary Green on vocals and guitar, me on guitar and vocals, and Anne on drums. We went through a string of bass players. The first was Jan Pumphrey. Anne and I met Jan and Mary through Nathan and Danny—both of whom were in Youth Brigade by that time. Mary and I wrote songs together. She wrote most of the lyrics and I wrote most of the music, but we collaborated a lot. After Jan, Sally Berg played bass for one show, then Tamera Edminster (a.k.a. Tamera Lyndsay) replaced her. We met Sally and Tamera because they worked at the 9:30 Club. Anne and I went to shows there a lot.

We wanted to do a band because we loved playing music and listening to music. We saw all our friends playing in bands and we wanted to do it too. We saw girls from New York, LA, San Francisco, and London playing in bands and they gave us inspiration and courage. We loved the energy and attitude of punk, which was about just putting yourself out there and doing something productive. We wanted to be socially aware and active rather than passive consumers. We actually only played out four times and all four shows were a blast. We opened up for the Velvet Monkeys for our first two shows and then got support from the older art punk crowd—Nurses, Half Japanese, Tru Fax & the Insaniacs.

As the DC hardcore scene became more macho and less about a tight-knit group of friends, we found greater support with this older group of people. We always thought of punk as having no rules, but when hardcore became more popular, a code developed to which Chalk Circle didn't adhere. Nonetheless, Anne and I loved hardcore and went to all the shows. We went to all the Minor Threat, SOA, Government Issue, and Youth Brigade shows and loved to dance. But as the dancing matched the music, we danced so hard that we came home with bruises all over our bodies! Even though the dancing was not intentionally violent, it stopped being safe for girls—a lot of guys wore chains and studs and didn't realize their own strength

Chalk Circle — photo by Mary Green

when they rammed into people. This was the precursor to slam dancing.

As the scene became more focused on thrash—i.e. loud, fast rules—Chalk Circle didn't fit in so well. Our music was influenced by a lot of music besides hardcore, especially post-punk, no wave, funk, pop, and '60s rock. I was listening to a lot of hard bop jazz at the time. Anne and I would drive around DC late at night after shows with the windows rolled down, blaring jazz on the radio. I loved Anne's drum style. Jeff Nelson taught Anne how to play thrash beats but she made up her own style. She played cymbals sparingly. We felt we had more in common with bands like Red C, with Toni Young on bass, who had a reggae influence.

I loved a lot of the bands that evolved out of hardcore that weren't generic thrash sounding and had a more experimental approach, like Red C and Toni's other bands—Peer Pressure, Nuclear Crayons, Hate From Ignorance, Fungus of Terror, Deadline, Void, Faith. I also really liked art punk bands like Velvet Monkeys, Half Japanese, Chumps, Tiny Desk Unit, Tony Perkins & the Psychotics. Chalk Circle fit in somewhere in the middle of all this.

Once I became friends with Colin Sears, he introduced me to all the younger hardcore kids in Bethesda. These were kids with a similar suburban background who were a few years younger and very open-minded. Colin had a great hardcore band called Capitol Punishment and we became friends after he, Mike Fellows, and I saw the DC premiere of *The Decline of Western Civilization*. It was through Colin that I met Chalk Circle's last bassist, Chris Niblack. Colin and I ended up in Bloody Mannequin Orchestra together after Chalk Circle broke up and then he went on to Dag Nasty. Chris went on to No Trend.

MRR: Why do you think DC had so many creative ladies but so few were in the "seminal"/remembered bands? Obviously, there are other aspects to punk that are as important as being in a band, but it just seems weird that Dischord didn't put out many bands with women in them 'til the late '80s/'90s—especially seeing the *Banned in DC* book, which has so many amazing punk ladies represented.

There weren't at the time, and still aren't, enough people in the underground or mainstream print and broadcasting media who were/are interested in documenting US bands with girls, especially those with creative musicians. There is a certain narrative that gets repeated over and over. The only reason the narrative began to change in the '90s is because of riot grrrl and because of the efforts of a lot of people to rethink rock/punk history. It is difficult to change the narrative when it is entrenched as a certain story from the very beginning. It was due to efforts of Chalk Circle and documentation such as *Banned in DC* that things changed in DC.

In the early-'80s, Ian told me Dischord didn't want to release Chalk Circle because our sound didn't fit the label's aesthetic. And I completely understand that, even though at the time it

photo by Dug Clarke

hurt since the scene was so small and tight-knit and we were all friends. But obviously his tastes changed by the time Fire Party or Slant 6 were around. And Dischord probably wouldn't have released them if it hadn't been for Chalk Circle or the efforts of women like me, Cynthia Connolly, Amy Pickering, and Lydia Ely. Cynthia and Amy worked for Dischord, and the four of us were responsible for the mixed-gender discussion group documentation for *MRR*'s "Women in Punk" issue in the late '80s. If Chalk Circle had been around five or ten years later, maybe we would have been on Dischord. After all, the Suture 7" is a split release between Decomposition and Dischord, and that came out in '92. I'm the kind of person who likes to focus on the positive, rather than the negative. So I'd rather look at the fact that change is often gradual and things are much better now than they were in the '80s. Bikini Kill was directly influenced by *Banned in DC*.

I think documenting the creative efforts of women is really important, even if the underground or mainstream media don't catch on until years later. It is the documentation that proves what happened and what is possible. The 1980s were too conservative to promote and sustain bands with women. There just wasn't enough support for female musicians, which translated into a lack of creative nourishment. Many women chose other creative avenues of expression that provided more nourishment, such as writing or photography or graphic design. You have to keep in mind that just before Chalk Circle played our first show, Henry left DC to join Black Flag and that changed things a lot. The attention got put on the bands like Black Flag that were touring a lot. The bands that are remembered are the ones that toured. Chalk Circle never toured—there were too many obstacles. It was hard enough for guys!

I was involved in the US hardcore scene through writing, rather than touring. Anne and I worked on one of the earliest DC hardcore zines, *Now What?* published in 1981 by Sarah Woodell. Then I became penpals with guys all over the US through Colin's and my zine, *If This Goes On*. There was this great network of fanzine writers who were also in punk bands, but they were all guys. My whole attitude was that I didn't want to be a groupie—I wanted to participate as an equal. I communicated with Thurston Moore who had just started Sonic Youth and did *Killer*, Barry Hennsler of the Necros who did *Smegma Journal*, Bob Moore who was in Rebel Truth for a bit who did *Noise* and ran the label Version Sound, and one of the guys from Jody Foster's Army who did *Phenis*. We all just found each other by reading each other's zines.

MRR: What's your favorite memory of being a young punk? Anything! A show, a feeling, the first time you heard a record...

The memory that is seared into my heart and brain is this—watching the Bad Brains and Teen Idles rehearse in the basement of Nathan's house with Henry. March 1980. It was an uplifting, exciting, exuberant feeling. I remember thinking "this is day one of my new life because I've finally found friends I fit in with." I felt completely accepted by them. We respected each other and we stimulated one another. I felt completely connected and inspired.

Another great memory is of seeing the Mo-dettes at the old 9:30 Club at 9th and F in DC. It was so rare to see an all-female punk band. Chalk Circle was the only all-girl punk band in DC until Fire Party and Nike Chix came along in the mid-'80s. So I went up to the singer for the Mo-dettes after their show and asked her for advice on how to deal with being in an all-girl band. She said something to the effect of, "You can't deny you're all girls, but remember you're in it for the music."

MRR: I remember a conversation I had with you recently where you said something along the lines of noise being a way to stay creative and DIY without being stuck in a rerun of the past—something a lot of punks/ex punks seem to get tangled up in. Instead of seeing punk as a musical idea/style of dress, I have always thought of it as an idea of possibility and freedom, DIY, etc., rather than a set of rules, and I think of your music and art as being so linked to this. How is it possible to stay fierce and brave and new and underground without seeming like a boring guy at a bar telling the same Black Flag anecdote over and over? Do you want to talk about your relationship to the underground scene and music and how you keep your sense of adventure in regards to it?

Yes, this makes sense. Thanks! I believe exactly what you said—that punk is an "idea of possibility and freedom." In my mind, punk is part of a lineage that stretches back through the 20th century that encourages freedom of expression through the means of everyday life. And it goes even farther back to a time when there were no rules about how art or music was supposed to be made. In other words, I see what I do in within a wider context.

I have a creative practice that is a daily exercise in exploration, experimentation, discovery. I'm interested in what I can do as an individual to engage other people. Noise is one avenue for this because noise is DIY and experimental. Actually, I was into noise back in the '80s and at that time it was seen as an extension of punk. When I was in Bloody Mannequin Orchestra, we opened up for Einsturzende Neubauten. We were all part of the same group of underground musicians. I liked noise when it was first evolving into industrial music and I was super into the New York noise scene in the early '80s. So I see a continuum with noise that has evolved from early punk to what it is today and it's mutated and transformed a lot.

Sonically I connect with noise because I like the way it makes me feel. It's actually very soothing and comforting! I love the feeling of being able to let go and lose myself in the moment that sounds are being made. It's similar to the energy I felt with punk. In these moments, the body takes over and responds to the sounds or the music even as the mind is working to conceptualize what's going on. It's a very visceral way of expressing various states of mind. That's what keeps things fresh for me. I also love narrative and sometime noise is too abstract for what I'm trying to express, especially when these ideas relate to what is happening on a larger social or political level. But at the same time, working abstractly challenges me. I usually have an idea first and then I choose how I'm going to express it. It usually comes from improvising in some way.

One of the things I like about collaborating with so many different people through Coterie Exchange is that I see how we all like noise or punk, in their broadest definitions, and integrate them into our own work in various ways. One of the original ideas I had behind Coterie Exchange was that it would be a vehicle for like-minded people to collaborate together, regardless of musical background and regardless of location. I wanted to bring together people from various regional scenes in order to facilitate a dialogue through working together. It just so happens that most of the people I know work independently. We're all pretty committed to the DIY concept. But I wouldn't rule out working with someone who wasn't underground. I've always been very broad-minded and I love a lot of different types of music, art, film and writing, so when I think about being creative I try not to limit myself much. Often I'll play with the conventions of different genres to explore various ideas.

MRR: What were your favorite records when you were 17? What about now?

Hmmm, when I was 17 it was 1978-79, my senior year in high school and first year of college. It's hard to remember because all my LPs are in storage. But what I vividly recall is that 1979 was the year everything changed musically because punk was evolving into post-punk. '79 was also the year the Germs' *GI* came out and that blew my mind. In trying to list my favorite records, I realized I have way too many to name. I love music and I've been buying records for 35 years, so what can I say? So I'm going to take the challenge to *only* list ones that were my favorites back when I was 17 *and* now and that I actually owned.

In no particular order:

All Beatles

Who – *Who Sell Out*, *A Quick One*, *Happy Jack*, *The Who Sings My Generation*, *Meaty Beaty Big & Bouncy*, *Who's Next*, *Tommy*, and *Quadrophenia*

Plastic Ono Band – *Power to the People/Touch Me* 7" and *Unfinished Music No.2: Life with the Lions*

Wings – *Wild Life*

Yardbirds – *For Your Love* and *Having a Rave Up*

Kinks – *The Kinks' Greatest Hits* and *Something Else*

Them – *Them*

Troggs – *Love is All Around*

Nuggets: Original Artyfacts From The First Psychedelic Era

Bob Dylan – *Freewheelin' Bob Dylan*

Neil Young – *Everybody Knows This Is Nowhere* and *After the Goldrush*

Patti Smith – *Gloria/My Generation* 7" and *Horses*

Television – *Marquee Moon*

Richard Hell & the Voidoids – *Blank Generation*

Clash – *The Clash*

Buzzcocks – *Another Music in a Different Kitchen*

Jam – *In the City and All Mod Cons*

Saints – *I'm Stranded*

Alternative TV – *Action Time Vision* 7"

The Adverts – *Crossing the Red Sea with*

Slits – *Cut*

Kleenex – *Hedi's Head* EP (Swiss version)

Delta 5 – *Mind Your Own Business* 7"

Au Pairs – *Kerb Crawler* EP

Raincoats – *Fairytale in the Supermarket* 7"

Teenage Jesus & the Jerks 7"s

Germs – *GI*

Tooth & Nail compilation LP w/Germs, Flesheaters, Middle Class, Negative Trend

Bags – *Babylonian Gorgon* 7"

Avengers – *We Are the One* EP

Urinals – *Ack Ack Ack Ack* EP

Wire – *Pink Flag*

Gang of Four – *Entertainment*

The Fall – *Live at the Witch Trials*

Joy Division – *Unknown Pleasures*

Swell Maps – early Rough Trade 7"s and *A Trip to Marineville*

Pere Ubu – *Heart of Darkness/30 Seconds Over Tokyo* 7"

Electric Eels – *Cyclotron/Agitated* 7"

13th Floor Elevators – *Psychedelic Sounds of* and *Easter Everywhere*

Chocolate Watchband – *No Way Out*

Syd Barrett – *Barrett* and *Madcap Laughs*

Roxy Music – *Roxy Music* and *For Your Pleasure*

Eno – *Here Come the Warm Jets*

David Bowie – *Space Oddity*

Turtles – *Happy Together/She's My Girl* 7"

Badfinger – *Straight Up*

Monkees – *More of the Monkees* and *Head*

Velvet Underground – *White Light/White Heat* and *Velvet Underground & Nico*

Stooges – *The Stooges*

MC5 – *Back in the USA*

Miles Davis – *'Round About Midnight*

Thelonious Monk – *Monk's Music*

John Coltrane – *Giant Steps*

Aretha Franklin – *I Never Loved a Man the Way I Love You*

Elmore James – *Original Folk Blues*

MRR: What's the best place you've ever lived and what was the best thing about it?

I have my most happy childhood memories from LA. In the '60s, it was a great place for kids because of the sunshine and beaches and open spaces. I don't think it's that way anymore because of the traffic congestion and urban development. I think I've always longed to recapture the sense of openness and freedom I felt back then. I had it for a while in the early-'80s DC punk scene and also for a long time in San Francisco, where I moved in 1990. I've been back in LA since 2005 and it's been great reconnecting to my past, but my favorite city so far to live in has been San Francisco.

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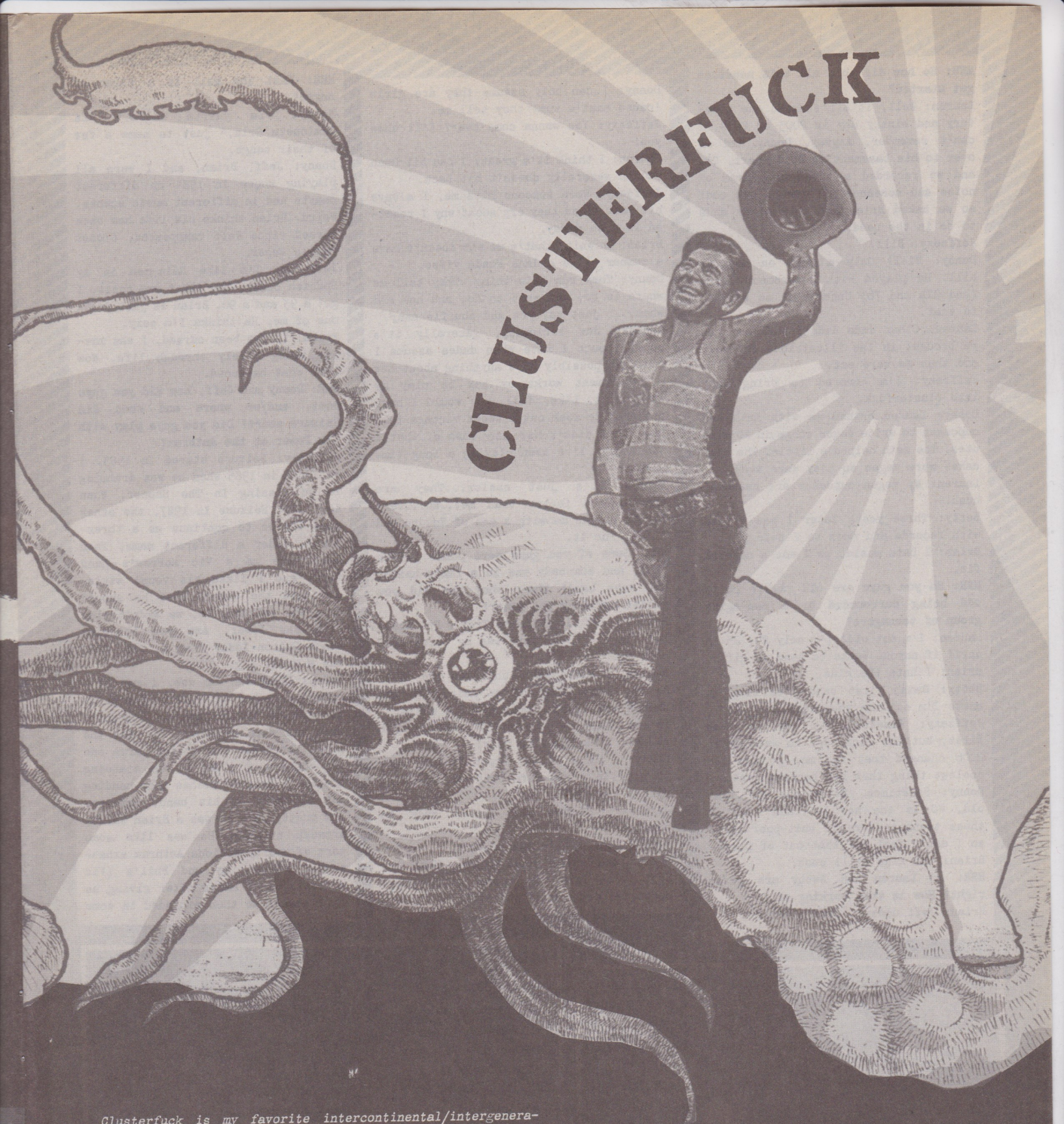


Clusterfuck is my favorite intercontinental/intergenerational hardcore band of all time. America has a habit of using up a punk's youthful energy, leaving us with only DJs and blog editors, while other countries' scene pioneers manage to start Judgement. It is refreshing to see people hold on to the fire that drives punk to be exciting in the first place. One of the things I like best about Clusterfuck is that intense nervous energy. They process 30 years of punk songwriting-discordant, aggressive, fast, and off-kilter- and blast it all out, never going above one minute and 45 seconds. After four years and several releases, they just put out their first LP-18 songs in 16 minutes. I tried to get some insight into what makes them tick, but like their music, it rages in four directions at once, occasional stopping long enough to impart some obtuse wisdom.

Interview by Killed By Jeff.

MRR: So how did this all this nonsense get started?

Lauren: Well, it all started one blustery and wintry day in 2003 or 2004, I can't remember. Anyway, Donny had me over to his basement in Bridgeport, CT, and we recorded a seven-song demo of noise and nonsense. It turned out cool so we asked Brian and this other dude to be in the band.

Jeffsexy: Bill.

Donny: Bill! Only a *Bill* on capital hill. He played with Government Issue (and CIA and 76% Uncertain) so *woo-hoo* to that.

Lauren: Other dude didn't work out, so we brought in the illustrious Jeffsexy and then we were set.

Jeffsexy: I'm honored to bring sexy into Clusterfuck.

Donny: Lauren bribed me with meth and cupcakes to write seven songs in 20 minutes. The meth helped a little. The cupcakes were vegan so they were weak.

Lauren: My vegan cupcakes are awesome, hush.

Betty: Three years later I was bribed with records and *mota* so I said yes.

Brian: I hate music, so I was a natural fit.

MRR: So you guys are old right? Is it odd being surrounded by a non-aging group of teenagers?

Lauren: I'm not old! I'm only 24, 25 in April if anyone wants to send me gifts.

Brian: I hate the kids.

Betty: Damn, first band I've been in where I'm not the youngest.

Jeffsexy: Honestly, it felt odd at first, but the mini-tour in Arizona in 2006 changed that for me. It was the coolest thing that has happened yet.

Donny: Sometimes. We're not all that old. 40 is the new 30...and some of those teenagers are in shit-poor shape so I don't feel all that out of place.

Brian: The kids still suck.

MRR: So Lauren and Betty are girls right? How is that working out?

Brian: Jeff doesn't have a member.

Donny: I can only assume they are girls 'cause that's what they tell me.

Jeffsexy: You wanna come over? I'll show you!

Lauren: I think it's great. I can hit Donn and he generally doesn't hit back.

Jeffsexy: When someone hits me, I *always* hit back. Then they cry about why I reacted in such a way.

Brian: Oh wait, that's me who doesn't have a member, like a Jane Fonda video.

Donny: They run this thing. They tell me where to go, and what to do, and how and when...I just say yes and shuffle away.

Lauren: But seriously, generally it's cool, though I hate when dudes assume I couldn't possibly know anything about how my equipment works or how to play my instrument. Like, dude, why would I have bothered to seek out a sweet vintage tube head if I didn't have any idea of what I was doing? I've been playing a long time now!

Donny: It's just easier...They are smarter and faster than me...so...they try to entice me with a can of Ensure and I fall for it.

MRR: Some of you guys were punks in the '80s, and somebody was in a fancy-haired new wave band? Who's who? How did you resist pounding the poser?

Betty: I was listening to Tigres Del Norte back in the '80s. That was my first concert ever.

Lauren: I was a small child in the '80s, as an infant most of my hair fell out though and I had a mohawk for a while.

Brian: Wait a minute! I resent that remark. I had amazing hair!

Donny: I think it was super fucking punk to play in a new-wave band on keyboards with a big fro!

Jeffsexy: Tigres Del Norte? Rock en español?

Betty: Hell no! It was *grupero*.

Donny: And we're still punks. What the hell else are we gonna be really? Respected members of society?

MRR: What the hell is a *tiger of norte*?

Betty: "La puerta negra," "La Camioneta Gris," just to name a few of their songs.

Donny: Jeff, Brian, and I were all playing shows in 1984 on different coasts and in different music scenes. Weird. Brian thinks his life has been cursed since Jeff reappeared. *Closet Potsie Weber.*

Jeffsexy: I'm like Rain-man in my Spanish class. The first two tests, I got a 93 and a 96. Brian is just jealous of me. He thinks I'm sexy.

Brian: It has been cursed. I was moving along nicely through life. Now look what happened.

MRR: Donny and Jeff, how did you guys meet, and/or where and when did Seizure start? Did you guys play with Raw Power at the Anthrax?

Jeffsexy: Seizure stared in 1983. I met Donn in 1985 when he was drumming in No Pissing In The Shower. When Karl left Seizure in 1987, the other guys wanted to continue as a three-piece, under a different name. Then Donn gave me a Vic Morrow's Head tape, and I liked his vocal style, and told the others that he should sing for Seizure. No, we didn't play with Raw Power. Are you thinking about Poison Idea? Them we did. That was a great gig.

Donny: Hahahaha. Oh wow. I met Jeff around December of 1984 in the parking lot of the Anthrax in Stamford. This was when Stamford, CT, and the whole Northeast was by and large one big boarded up slum. He was standing outside a Rest In Pieces show handing out stickers of his band, Seizure. I'm pretty sure it was a Brian Walsby artwork sticker. He was like some sort of overly-serious Anthrax ambassador. Shaking my and Phil's (Vic Morrow's Head) hands after giving us this *shwag*. He then exploded in some

kind of giggle fit and ran off howling and shouting gibberish. It was quite an introduction. Seizure started about a year before I met Jeff, and had Karl Agell on vocals during the time period I saw them. They were certainly the embodiment of *Connecticut Fun*...more so then every other very, very serious CTHC band. Seizure, No Milk On Tuesday, and sometimes Violent Children and Vatican Commandos could be counted on to have a lot of fun live. I was at the Raw Power show when they played there...but I'm sure I was on drugs and forgot who else played. My first HC band had just broken up so I was just hitting all the shows and having fun and taking a break from band stuff for a few months. I do recall me and Jeff and some others...not many...shaking our heads in wonderment as Siege tore us a new butthole at the Anthrax. I was there literally three times a week as was Jeff and about two-dozen others. I joined Seizure when Karl Agell left to sing for School Of Violence (later for Corrosion Of Conformity on their mega-hit *Vote With a Bullet*) ...thus kicking off the "*Seizure was better when Karl sang*" period of the band. They finally got a singer as retarded as the rest of the band so there was at least that. We recorded two LPs too, which isn't so bad. We did so many ridiculous shows...including some of the first shows Mike Bullshit had at ABC No Rio. One of my favorites was playing a straight edge bill in Providence, RI, in full drag and balls out tripping on acid. A whole sea of crossed arms and scowls for the whole set. This was one of the great shows we did where I got punched in the balls.

MRR: You were around a lot of the early ABC shows, I think you said you almost joined Born Against on drums?

Jeffsexy: In 1990, Seizure played a gig at ABC No Rio with Krakdown, SFA, Burn, and Quicksand. After the gig, Sam and Adam from Born Against asked if I wanted to play drums for them. They were fairly new at the time, so I declined, because I was in two other bands. Boy, that was a mistake! That's why I tend to hang onto bands. I'm glad I hung on to Clusterfuck!!!

MRR: Jeff, last year raw South American became all the rage with the filthiest of collector scum. Didn't you put out some South American punk records in the '90s?

Jeffsexy: I released some hardcore from Puerto Rico.

MRR: What sort of Puerto Rican band's records did you release? How did you find them?

Jeffsexy: I released a Puerto Rican HC 7" comp in 1991 called *House Arrest*, which is out of print. Golpe Justo 7" in 1991. In 1992, I released Sham Pain, *Siempre lo Mismo* 7" and Hijos De Nadie, *El Puto Sistema* 7". In 1983, I read in an issue of *MRR* about hardcore bands in these Latin American countries: Mexico, Argentina, Spain, Peru, and Colombia. Being half Puerto Rican myself, I said to myself, "I'd like to see if there's something in Puerto Rico." When the Seizure *Is Money Your God?* LP was out, we got a letter from someone from Puerto Rico who wanted the release. As well as sending him the record, I asked if there was a scene in PR. When he said there was, he gave me some demos of bands down there, and that's what began the *House Arrest* comp. That was history right there. I made a three-EP set called *Este tipo esta loco* with Golpe Justo, Sham Pain, and HDN. There's still some left. Get them now before they're gone forever! You can get them through me.

MRR: Did Vic Morrow's Head have a demo/release?

Donny: Actually, we did. We recorded a five-song cassette on a boom box in Yuma and gave them out at shows in the Phoenix/San Diego area in from April to June 1984. We went to Pic N Save and got these celebrity greeting cassettes made for answering machines that were about one minute on each side and taped over those. They were perfect for five hardcore songs and have wonderful pointless celebrity bleed at the end like Phyllis Diller and Jamie Farr. Those were about ten for a dollar when we weren't stealing them. This of course was back in the *no cameras but a fat store detective* days. You could steal anything from anywhere as long as you had someone wander around and keep the detective busy as the other stuffed their coats and pants with stuff. I have all the recordings we did but nothing studio. We had handmade cabinets and instruments, so going into a studio was out of the question. We were so poor. Plus there really weren't any aside from one or two in Phoenix. Different times for sure.

MRR: Betty, you're a new face? Where'd you come from?

Betty: I guess being a border girl just like Donn, he felt attracted to my musical talents.

MRR: You're from a border town right? What's the immigration war like down there?

Betty: Everyone's got their opinions on how things should work at the border. We are *Mexicans* not *Mexican'ts*. So, if we want to jump the fence and get to your country, we'll jump it. You want to put a taller fence, we'll wear stilts and we'll still jump it. People like the Minutemen really piss me off. If you really think about, it's not even the white man's territory. It's the native's land that the white man took. If anything, it should be the natives at the border getting rid of the white men.

White people don't want to go and pick cotton in the fields-I know, generic example-what the hell are they complaining about? There's still a whole bunch of jobs these people can take, but because they are lazy they won't take them. I say *pfft* to that.

MRR: Brian, why are you in a band that you clearly hate?

Brian: Some kind of self-loathing I guess. It brings me nothing but pain and anguish.

MRR: Donn, would you call yourself a patriot?

Donny: If by *patriot* you mean the kind of guy who would like to help the whole rotting system to collapse and end the lies and exploitation, then yes I'm that kind of patriot. *Up the punx! Smash the system! Eat more processed cheese spread!*

MRR: Being old enough to remember, who has done a better job of driving the USA into the ground, Reagan or Bush?

Jeffsexy: I think Reagan created the monsters behind Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden.

Brian: Clearly Bush! However, Reagan laid a nice foundation for him.

Jeffsexy: Reagan's just as responsible. Alive or dead. I think this corrupt government created its own problems.

Betty: Well, Salinas de Gortari did a horrible job too.

Lauren: I agree with Brian-Bush has made a tremendous mess.

Betty: Sorry, I go by Mexican science instead, that's the shit I know.

Jeffsexy: He sure did. I once had a one-dollar bill that said, "Impeach liar Bush" "Bush let 9-11 happen." I even showed that dollar bill to Brian.

MRR: I think Donn said the '80s were marked by a constant sense of impending nuclear destruction? Like some *Red Dawn* type shit?

Donny: To be alive during the most corrupt admin ever in our history? It's breathtaking!

Betty: You haven't been to Mexico, have you?

Jeffsexy: In history class, the instructor asked, "Have you seen the movie, *Red Dawn*?" I said, "Isn't that a propaganda movie?"

Lauren: I think it's going to be a long time, at least a generation, before we recover from Bush. We don't even know the extent of the damage yet. When they add up the costs of the war, including the amount of interest on debts, costs for caring for veterans, it's mind-boggling. We're screwed.

Donny: Completely. I knew any minute we'd go up in a big ball of heat. So I partied like it was 1999. Mexico has corrupt governing down to a science. We're still blundering along.

Jeffsexy: 1999? That's when Clinton was in office. Prince was way ahead of his time.

MRR: Things seem all quiet on the western front despite a political and social climate that should inspire some musical retardation, why is that?

Betty: Damn, that question was too complicated for me.

Donny: No draft, and the war is not being funded by taxes so it's not hitting the pocketbook that much.

Jeffsexy: 1999 was a good year for me.

Betty: I only got two years of college remember?

Donny: Americans are not truly being affected by this *war*.

Betty: The way I see it in the *punk* community, people think they are too punk to care so they are only focusing on the problems that affect them directly and not what is going on around them.

Donny: Tax everyone in the US $400 apiece to fund this war and it would end tomorrow.

Lauren: They tallied what the cost will be to each family over the next ten or twenty years and its like $42,000 in taxes per family of four. They just aren't feeling it yet.

MRR: Is it weird being a band when two-fifths of the band lives on the other side of the country? How did you write an LP like that?

Jeffsexy: I think it makes it more interesting.

Lauren: It was a bit interesting. Donn and Bernice came out and we spent a few hours in the garage, hammered out eighteen songs and then recorded them the next day. We're pros.

Brian: Funny, it doesn't seem that weird to me at all. I think everybody just falls into their respective roles.

Betty: I kinda enjoy this country-wide band thing. We don't get to see each other every day, otherwise I would go nuts.

Lauren: Yeah, I mean, we're all kind of annoying.

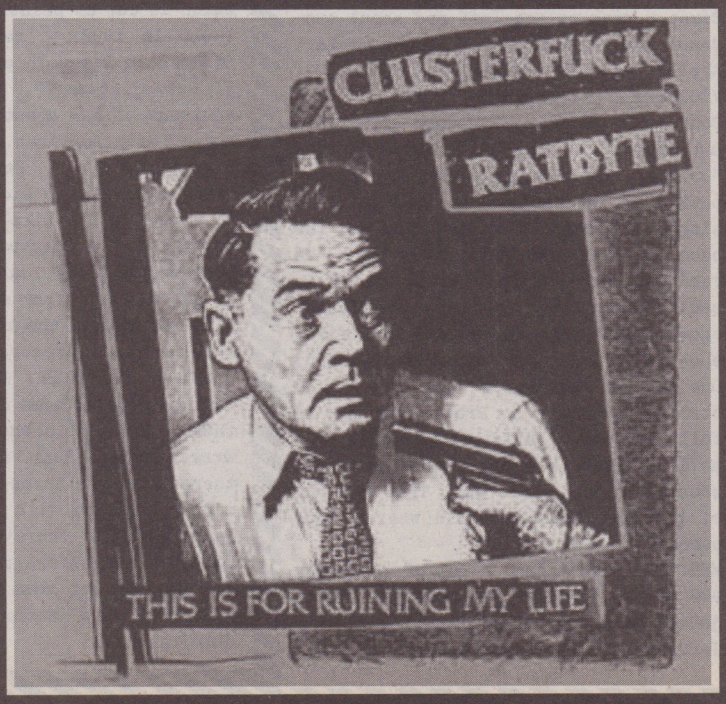
Betty: I think this band will last longer than people would actually want it to last, but that's what I like about it.

Lauren: It's not really rocket science.

Donny: Grumpy guy, stern annoyed girl, giggling guy, oversensitive whiny guy, and mean girl who hits people.

Lauren: Wait, which one am I?

Jeffsexy: I don't mind if I'm in it until I'm dead.



Lauren: I'm the stern one right? I'll do this forever. This is the best band I've ever been in.
Betty: I'm not mean, Donn shut the fuck up or I'll punch you when I see you.
Brian: Hey, I'm not a mean girl!
Jeffsexy: I've seen Betty punch Donn. I have pics of it and it's fucking funny!
Donny: I love Clusterfuck. I love the waves of hate and confusion in the room.
MRR: What sort of shameless song recycling have you guys engaged in?
Lauren: What!? None! Except for the "Game" song that I borrowed a bass-line from.
Brian: Should we tell about the P. Diddy track we're redoing?
Lauren: Haha. Shh!
Donny: I have used four songs that I cowrote in 1984 with the two deceased members of Vic Morrow's Head which would have never seen the light of day otherwise.
Jeffsexy: I wish I was in Vic Morrow's Head.
Brian: I copped "Everybody's Working for the Weekend" in one of the songs.
MRR: A lot of your songs seem to evolve out of an idealized 1950s American consumer mentality. Where does that come from?
Donny: From having eight channels growing up and being trapped sometimes by 120-degree heat and having it meld into your subconscious.
Lauren: Donny is the sermonizer.
MRR: A common motif in Clusterfuck songwriting is the use of the tritone. As it is the standard interval of dissonance in Western music, the tritone tends to make the music sound like a Clusterfuck.

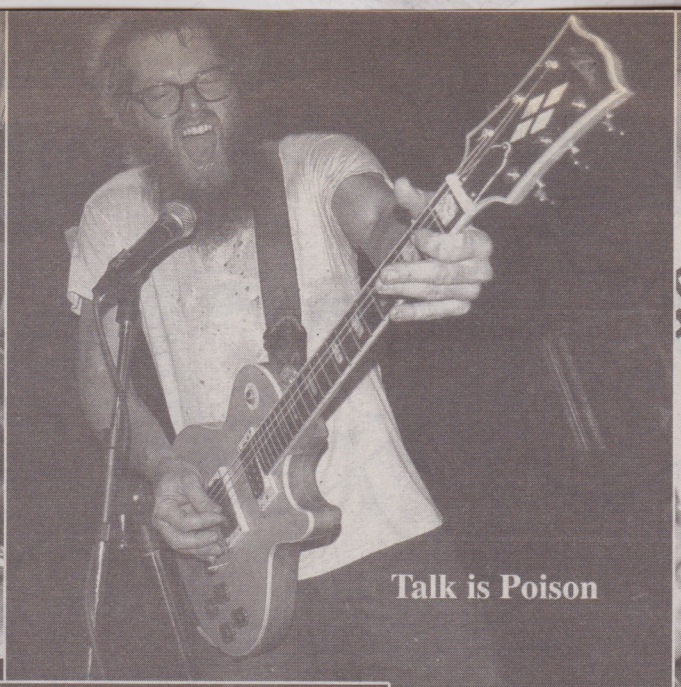
Does the name of the band influence the songwriting, or did the songwriting influence the name of the band?
Lauren: That's a *Donn Vanak* specialty. All our songs are soothing lullabies.
Brian: The devil's sound!
Donny: Not an augmented fourth?
Lauren: A little of column A and a little of column B? I think it's just how Donny and I write.
Betty: Damn dude, nobody told me I'd need a dictionary for this.
Donny: I seriously just pour the songs out. I didn't know there was an actual rhyme or reason to my octave-anal inversion.
MRR: Any records planned?
Lauren: We just released the eighteen-song LP and I believe we're planning to record another 7" during the Southwestern tour in January-speaking of which, we'll be hitting up Arizona and Mexico in January. We're even playing a show in Mexico sponsored by a brothel! Everyone should come out for the shows!
Donny: Another 7" on the Yotch Multimedia label by summertime.
MRR: How deep is your love?
Lauren: I really need to learn. 'Cause were living in a world of fools. Breaking us down. When they all should let us be. We belong to you and me.
Brian: Barry Gibb!
Betty: I really love egg nog
Lauren: I like soy nog! 'Tis great.
Donny: Da da da da da da da. Fucking Bee Gees. Thanks a bunch Killedbyjeff, stuck in my head forever now.
MRR: Plug your other projects and junk.

Lauren: Sudden Walks! I play drums which rules. Brian is in the Symbionts.
Betty: I play guitar in Pop Gestapo, guitar and vox in Standard Deviance, and drums and attitude in Broloaf.
Jeffsexy: King Sexy, I play guitar! Betty loves to dance to King Sexy!
Donny: I'm not gonna plug my junk. Standard Deviance, Pop Gestapo-super joyous, posi-traction, kinda free-love vibe, organic peanut butter, cozy, and delightful.
Betty: I got pizza and hot wings in the fridge; yum.
Donny: Did we even answer any of these questions? Ha ha.
Lauren: Hah.
Betty: Ha hah, I don't think so.
Donny: It'll read like we're all in the room I'm sure, and talking over each other.

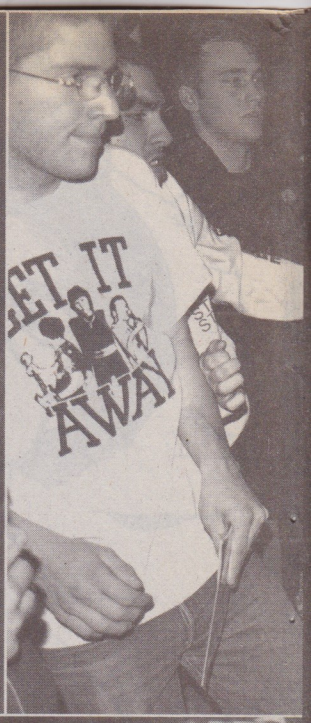
Shortly after this interview, Brian left the band to devote more time to coin collecting and the application of back ointment. Clusterfuck soldiers on boldly. If anybody wants a copy of the LP, just email Lauren at laturek@gmail.com, say that you read Killedbyjeff's brilliant interview, and I'll throw in a free copy of the first EP.

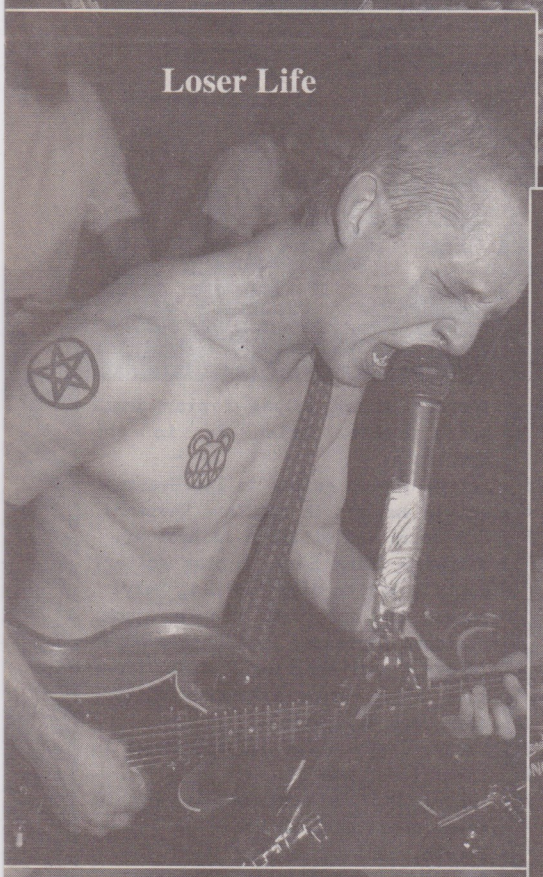
Clusterfuck Discography:
2003: 7-song Demo CD-R
2004: *Midlife Crisis* EP
2005: "Shakin my Death Rattle" on *AZ Punk Comp Volume 4*
2006: *This Is For Ruining My Life* split EP with RAT BYTE
2007: *How The West Was Won* LP

I Attack



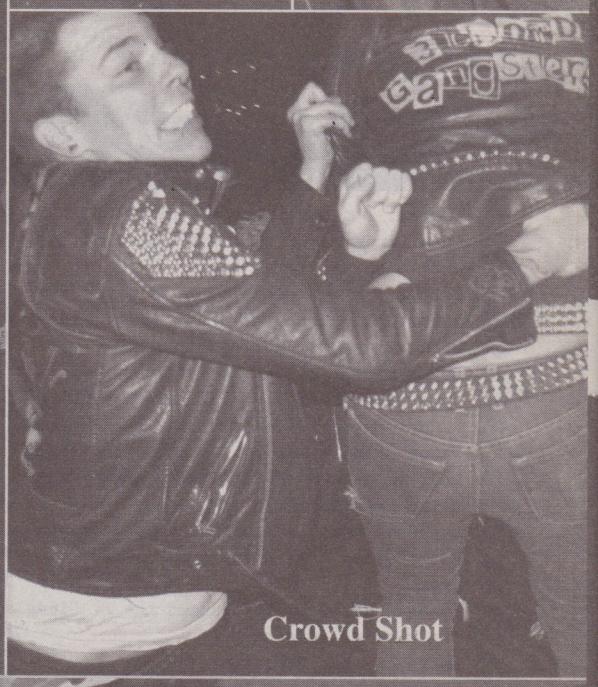
Talk is Poison





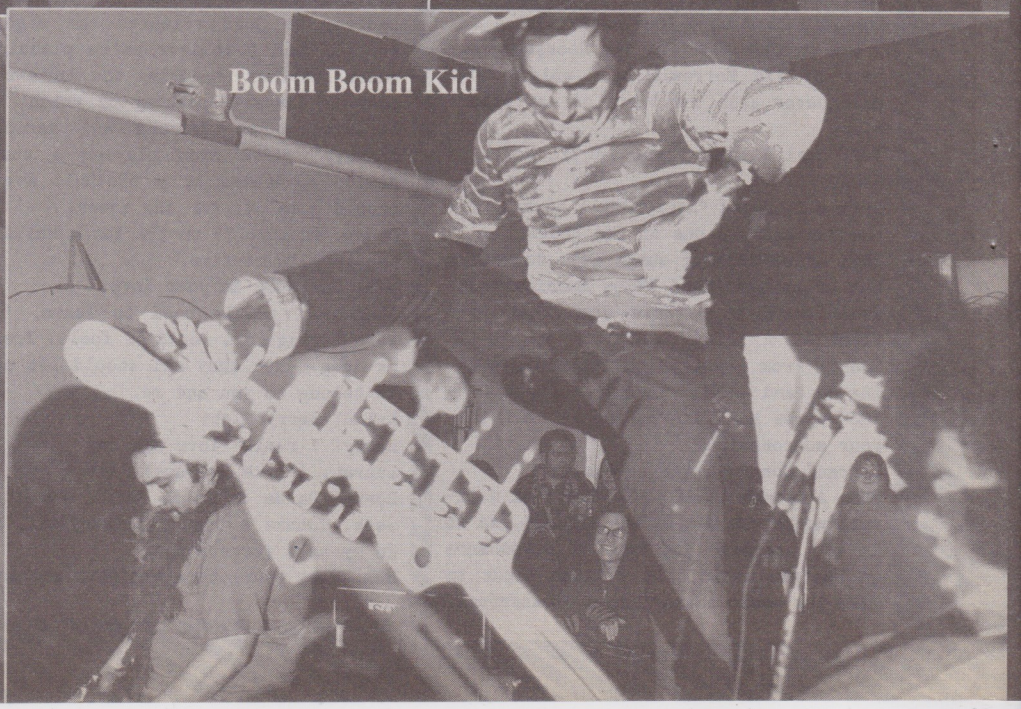
Loser Life

Social Unrest



Crowd Shot

Wasted Time

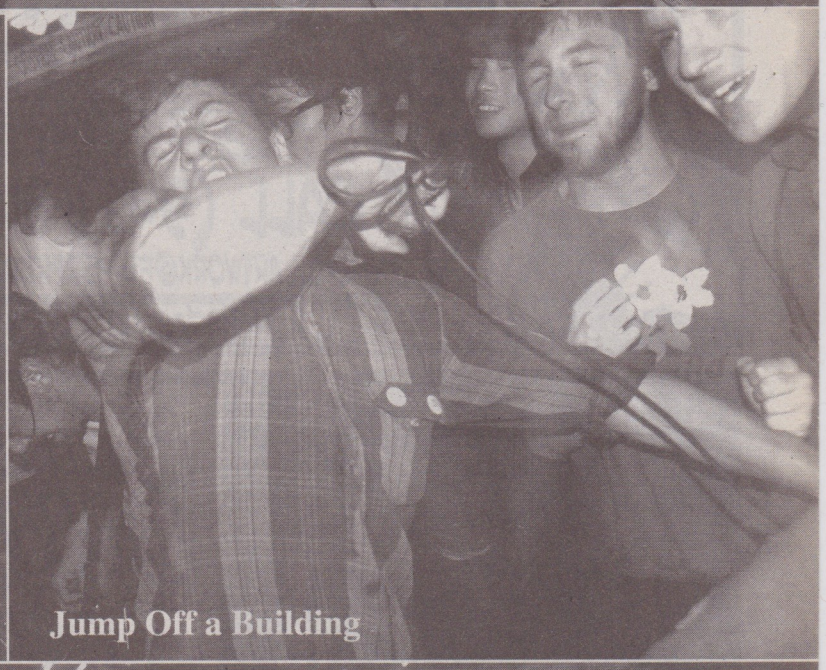


Boom Boom Kid

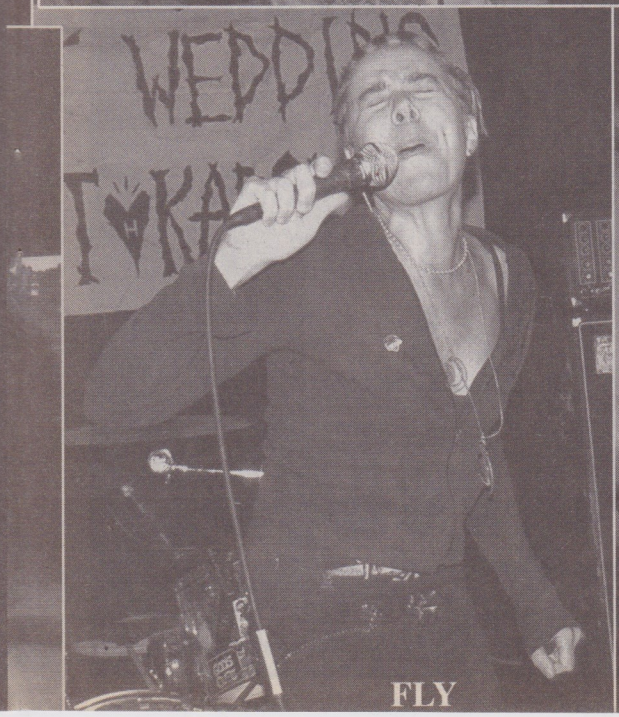
Born Bad

Harpoon Guns

Parasites Go



Jump Off a Building



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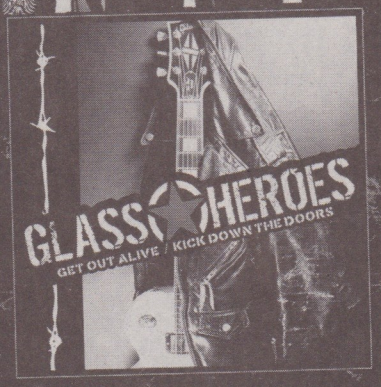

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SILENT ORDERS
The Story Of Slaughter of the Innocent

By Lance Hahn

In the late '70s, Swiss Grand Prix winner Hans Ruesch focused his attention on his other great passion, animal rights, and wrote the seminal book *Slaughter of the Innocent.* Possibly the single most effective weapon in the war against animal torture and vivisection, the book is still hailed today as a convincing argument to end all animal testing.

Nearly a decade after the first publication of the book, three animal rights activists started a band with the same name, playing simple but catchy punk.

Sue, bass player: "It was a fantastic experience. We were by no means one of the better known bands around at the time but it's a great feeling when you watch people jumping around having a good time and then coming up to you after the gig wanting info about the lyrics. We always had lyric sheets to give out at gigs so that it was more than just the music."

It's interesting how many kids got into punk rock—especially outside of London—due to the banality of *Top of the Pops*, a music chart show on TV in the UK.

Sue: "I first got into punk through seeing bands on *Top of the Pops*: Stiff Little Fingers, the Clash, the Damned, in the late '70s, early '80s. The Jam and Siouxsie and the Banshees were two of the first live bands I ever saw.

"I first heard anarcho punk when a friend leant me *Stations of the Crass* by Crass and *Strive to Survive* by Flux of Pink Indians. I'd just left school, had my first mohican, and was heavily into animal rights. I bought every LP and 7" I could find in a black and white fold-out sleeve!"

As is the case with most (though admitted by few), Sue came to punk rock first and from there discovered anarchism and radical politics.

Sue: "I read every word on every record sleeve and fanzine that I bought, and from there discovered books by Emma Goldman, Alexander Berkman, etc. My main 'cause,' though, has always been and always will be animal rights."

Coming from Seaside Brighton, the previous battleground between mods and rockers, Sue found the '80s punk scene there a surprisingly congenial affair, a situation that for the most part still exists to this day.

Sue: "[The scene was] pretty good actually, considering I lived in a small town in Surrey. We had the Riverside Club in Fetcham (a small Country Club in the middle of nowhere!) that put on loads of bands from all different genres: the Pogues, King Kurt, the Meteors, Skeletal Family, Lost Cherrees. All the punks, psychobillies, and goths were friends. I DJed there a few times and Slaughter of the Innocent played our first gig there in November 1986.

"I was lucky to live close to London and would go see bands like Conflict, Poison Girls, Antisect, and Icons of Filth. I was at the infamous Conflict gig at Brixton Academy! I must have seen hundreds of bands over the years, but sadly never got to see one of my favorites, the Mob."

Through anarcho punk, Sue became more and more interested in animal rights issues, soon getting involved with the Hunt Saboteurs.

The origins of Hunt Saboteurs could be traced back to the '50s when the League Against Cruel Sports decided to endorse direct action as a means of shutting down the hunts. In August of 1958, the group was involved with laying down false scents to lead hounds off of the trail and disrupt the hunt. Though the attempt failed, it brought massive publicity to the movement, greatly increasing their membership. The move to direct action led to a more sophisticated means of creating new trails disrupting hunts throughout the Southeast and Midlands. In 1962, militant Gwen Barter single-handedly shut down the Norwich Staghounds by putting her body in front of the convoy. She would later prevent East Kent FH from killing a fox by getting between the hunters and the foxhole.

Largely due to the momentum and interest in direct action all created by the LACS, the Hunt Saboteurs Association was formed at the end of 1963 by John Prestige. Their first action was on Boxing Day of that year. Secretly over-feeding the hounds with beef provided by a local butcher, the dogs had a waning interest in chasing the fox. The HAS also blew hunting horns in random spots, causing total confusion.

A January 1964 action increased their activity, adding blockading roads. Since the start, the group had been trying to develop a compound that would throw the hounds off of the foxes trail while not hurting anyone. Chemical X was first used in April of that year, a scent-dulling mixture that was harmless to the dogs.

From that first action in December 1963, new Hunt Sab groups were popping up all across the country. Soon the group went international. But simultaneously, the ruling class struck back. Arrests began with the second action and the violence soon followed. With hunting a pastime almost entirely of the bourgeois, the privileged have been able to use their considerable influence to get away with everything from violent beating to trumped up prison time.

Like the CND, animal rights and the sometimes-romanticized notion of direct action were reborn with the anarcho punk scene. Along with the Animal Liberation Front, the Hunt Sabs had a sudden bump in popularity, with more and more autonomous cells working around the country. Slaughter of the Innocent was a group of anarcho punks who met through this work.

Sue: "We all knew each other through Hunt Sabbing. Melita and Tiff had been in bands together before but Steve and I hadn't. They were all based in Sussex, so I moved down to Brighton to make things easier."

While perhaps not familiar to, eh, all the members of the group, the book *Slaughter of the Innocent* was still important to the cause and even sounded like a band name.

Sue: "It seemed appropriate because we had all met through being Hunt Sabs. I've not actually read the Hans Ruesch book."

Originally a trio, they were greatly improved by the addition of Melita on vocals with the new quartet (the others being Tiff on drums and Steve on guitar) debuting at the Riverside Club in Fetcham, Surrey at the end of 1986.

Sue: "We played about twenty gigs altogether. The majority were benefits for something or other and a lot were organized by us in local pubs and clubs in Brighton.

"The first song we wrote was called 'Bloodlust Scum.' Our songwriting abilities vastly improved when Melita joined the band. She wrote some fantastic lyrics."

Melita's vocals are definitely one of the group's strong points, making them more interesting than a lot of the punk bands of the time. Not typical female vocals, her approach was somewhere between Kirk Brandon and Feargal Sharkey. The obvious comparison would be to that of a faster Penetration. Plus, the band was quite melodic and by the time they first went into the studio, you would never know that they were relative novices.

Just a month after their first show, the group was in the studio for the first time, recording their demo tape *Silent Orders*.

Sue: "Melita and Tiff had both been in the studio before; it was a totally new experience for Steve and me. We picked our four best tunes and recorded and mixed them over two days in December 1986—the result was our *Silent Orders* demo. It sold 300 copies and got a favorable review from Mick Mercer in *Melody Maker*."

The cassette also was positively received in many fanzines, which helped its popularity. With cassette culture being so totally embraced by the anarcho scene, Slaughter of the Innocent were in some ways at the right place just barely at the right time.

While certainly in the anarcho camp, they also clearly had their own approach and analysis.

Sue: "There were four tracks on the *Silent Orders* demo: 'Ghost Dance,' 'Practice Makes Perfect,' 'The Wise Woman,' and 'Never Again Parts 1 & 2.'

"We covered all kinds of issues from the persecution of women as witches to the holocaust. Melita sums up the importance of lyrics well in a quote from a fanzine interview from 1987 when asked which topics were most important : 'All the subjects are pretty well of equal importance, because all exploitation, oppression, and abuse in this world are inter-linked—nothing happens in isolation. We are encouraged not to make those links because our ignorance is one of the ways in which that exploitation is maintained. At the moment in Britain—and in many other places as well—the government is making a concerted attack on the weakest, least organized, and least popular sections of society: gays, women who need abortions, immigrants of color, and others, and all are going to be severely affected if bills up before parliament become law. We've already seen the introduction of wide-sweeping police powers to deal with strikers and demonstrators, and trade unions have effectively been legalized against so that employers have free reign to do virtually what they like. Even if we don't feel that something affects us directly, we must help the struggle with those who are—for when the time comes, who will help us?'"

Being activists as well as musicians, the members of the group certainly had some credentials with the anarchists.

Sue: "Anarcho punk was my life. I went to gigs, played in a band, did a fanzine, ran Ray of Hope Distribution, took part in all kinds of demonstrations, wore black combats, Conflict t-shirts and had a green Mohican! The network of friends that grew through letter writing from all over the world, most of whom never actually met, was inspirational, a real community of sorts. I traveled the South and Midlands to gigs and demos, cadging lifts and sleeping on floors. This was the Thatcher years so we were all pretty politically motivated. I personally attended many animal rights demos, Miners' strike benefits, the Wapping print strike picket lines, anti-Poll Tax demos, Stop the City, Clause 28, etc. A lot of these ended in riots due to heavy-handed policing. We truly believed we were fighting to make the world a better place."

The group found camaraderie with certain local bands while finding inspiration with some of the more famous anarcho bands.

Sue: "On a local level, we played a lot of gigs with Why?, Five-Star Rock 'n' Roll Petrol, and Suspect Device—all good bands with a lot to say and a healthy attitude.

"I was personally fuelled by Conflict and the other Mortarhate bands; can't count how many times I saw Conflict play live. Was good friends with Steve of the Lost Cherrees and traveled round with them quite a bit. Also loved the Mob and Zounds."

In the summer of 1987, Steve left the group and for the most part stopped playing music. He was replaced by Matt from Brighton punks Why? By the fall, the group was back in the studio recording for their vinyl debut.

Sue: "We had recorded several tracks. One was to be on a 7" compilation on Words of Warning Records and the rest were to be on a split 12" on Meantime Records. Sadly, these never saw the light of day because we broke up."

Though never officially released, those tracks (including the great pop punk song "A New Dark Age") were given out in cassette form.

Sue: "Only the above-mentioned tracks, which we copied for people that wanted them after we parted ways!"

The band split up in 1988.

Sue: "Can't really remember but there was a fair bit of tension and I wanted to move up to London so we called it quits after a couple of years together."

For most of the band, it would be their last time playing music, though Matt still played guitar for Why?

Though only in a band for a couple of years, Sue affirms that the anarcho scene itself as well as her involvement with activism, has left a lasting impression.

Sue: "It was a really exciting time; the energy and commitment that everyone involved put into it was truly inspiring. I doubt if there are many people who are not still influenced by it to some extent even now, over twenty years later…it certainly left a spark in me! As I head into my 40s and look back on those years, they really did help to create the person I am today—and even though, on the outside, many of us may be living the 'conventional' life with steady jobs and mortgages to pay, families to take care of, I know that every decision we make in life has the thought behind it, 'how will this affect other people?' Anarcho punk was about challenging the norm, not accepting things the way they were just because that's how it's always been. It may have come across as aggressive to the outsider, but that level of anger and determination can only grow out of a genuine wish and belief that the world can be a better and fairer place for all people and not just some people.

Did it change the world? I think so; those thoughts that we put into action will have inspired others in ways that we'll never know. I still believe in the ideas that created anarcho punk and I still live my life with those ideas at the forefront of everything I do. I think that in itself has changed the world!"

KARMA SUTRA

WHEN THE MUSIC STOPS
The Story of Karma Sutra
By Lance Hahn

Being from the town of Luton, the band Karma Sutra was brushing around an older anarcho archaeological site: the Diggers.

Dave: "I certainly didn't learn about it at school, but I do remember us all getting involved with some daft re-enactment of the day they burnt down the town hall. John (Karma guitarist) and I used to do a dodgy acappella version of the Diggers song."

To be honest, most of my knowledge of the Diggers came from seeing a great 1975 film, *Winstanley*, from Kevin Brownlow and Andrew Mollo. This sympathetic film tells the story of Gerrard Winstanley and the so-called Diggers, a term, like "punk," foisted upon a group against their will and meant as an insult. Still, like punk we now refer to the name not with its derogatory original intention, forgetting that they were actually called the True Levellers.

In the mid-1600s, after the First English Civil War and the execution of King Charles I, many groups in England were vying for the power to dictate what form the new government would take. The Diggers were possibly the most radical in their agenda, believing that all of England could be broken down, essentially, into self-supporting, collectivized soviets. A proto-anarchist, proto-communist notion, they believed that with the means of production in the hands of the communes, the ruling class would simply dissipate into the collective in order to live.

The Diggers pushed their agenda in 1649, taking over common land, planting vegetables to be given away for free in a time when the price of food was leading to starvation. The idea was that this would encourage more people to get involved, with the movement becoming a serious challenge to the landowners.

In April of that year, the first attacks by gangs organized by Lord of the Manor Francis Drake happened, with the violence against the Diggers eventually escalating to arson. Beating continued until June when, due to pressure from landowners, the Diggers were arrested for the first time for trespassing. Though their crops were thriving, legal action against the group continued culminating with the arrival of a military detachment in March 1650. With their finances dwindling and the sustained attacks from a frightened ruling class, the group was forced to disband in June 1650.

While Karma Sutra may not have been familiar with Winstanley, their revolution was to some extent a ripple of that first splash in 1649.

Karma Sutra was one of those bands that I came across due to a barrage of flyers that seemed to come with every parcel I received from England—the band everyone expected to succeed and be the Rolling Stones to Chumbawamba's Beatles. However, the group managed one LP and then split.

Politically astute and sophisticated, by their peak they were producing handouts that matched *Spectacular Times* in their potency and plain speak. But founding member David Heels, a.k.a. Dave Commodity, got his start in music to annoy his siblings.

Dave: "As a kid, I had an older sister into Motown and a younger one into the Bay City Rollers and David Cassidy. So it was only natural that I adopted Slade and T-Rex and anything I could turn up really loud, if for no other reason than to annoy my siblings.

"A lot of people seem to forget that there were three or four really barren years here in the UK, when even the surviving glam bands had all mellowed and were playing 'My Friend Stan' and 'Far, Far Away', when I was desperately crying out for more 'Squeeze Me, Please Me' and 'Teenage Rampage.' There was nothing but really turgid pop music in the charts, ABBA and disco shit. Then along came "New Rose," and a few weeks later "Anarchy in the UK," and once again kids like me had a reason to crank our stereos up to 11.

"A lot of people claim to have been into the Ramones and the New York Dolls during the pre-punk years, but I don't honestly remember hearing of any of these bands until years later, which probably helped make the whole '76/'77 explosion even more exciting for me."

Early attempts at a band were more in the traditional punk mode; obnoxious rock 'n' roll.

Dave: "I'd been at school with Neil (bass) and had an early attempt at a band with him called the Injuncted. Neil was playing guitar and I was playing drums (not that either of us could). The band only lasted a few gigs before splitting up. I then started singing with a cracking little band from Luton called the Phallic Symbols. Phil McCavity and Steve Hero (guitar and bass) were both big fans of the New York Dolls, Slaughter and the Dogs, Anti-Nowhere League, and stuff like that—and were pretty competent musically. It was good fun. I really enjoyed that period. We lasted a while and gigged quite regularly until I left. I can't remember why, but I have a feeling my girlfriend Jo, might have been at the center of it, somehow."

Not nearly the end of his musical career, Dave soon helped start Karma Sutra.

Dave: "After a little thumb-twiddling, one drunken night in Blockers Arms (a pub shared by all the local punks and owned by a chapter of Hell's Angels) myself, Neil, and John formed Karma. There were half a dozen of us at the start and we started gigging as soon as we'd

written our first song: 'If I was Director General of the BBC,' which sported a rift blatantly stolen from Sparks' 'This Town Ain't Big Enough for the Both of Us' but very badly played. We had absolutely no musical skill at all at that time, and I must admit it felt like a step backwards for me at the time after playing in the Phallic Symbols (who could actually play their instruments and were much more fun).

"Like most bands there was a fair bit of member shuffling going on in the early stages, which continued right up until the band split up. But myself, John, and Neil (and later Graeme) all remained constant. And Jo (who, at one time or another, went out with at least three members of the band) was with us much of the way too, often driving the van for us and generally being very useful."

But somewhere between the Phallic Symbols and Karma Sutra, Dave was introduced to *The Feeding of the 5000*.

Dave: "A school friend of mine called Glynn bought a copy of *The Feeding of the 5000*. He was always lending me stuff. I think he probably also introduced me to SLF, Eater, and Crisis.

"There were a couple of things about *Feeding* that instantly won me over. The blank space where 'Reality Asylum' was supposed to be, and the minute's silence during 'They've Got a Bomb.' But above all that, I really liked the drumming on it.

"I'd had early encounters with the SWP and was very much into the National Union of School Students, Red Rebel, Anti-Nazi League, School Kids Against Nazis, etc., so I was already becoming very politically active before I'd ever heard of Crass.

"In later years, when Karma were at their busiest, most of the band worked or helped out in Houseman's Bookshop and the PeaceMeal health food shop opposite, on Caledonian Road, King's Cross. So we were all pretty well read on anarchist politics."

The result was a group with a much-defined party line.

Dave: "The Phallic Symbols was definitely more punk rock. I think we started Karma from the outset thinking that we were an anarcho band and I don't think there was ever any discussion about abandoning that idea."

It turned out that the local punk scene was quite friendly and supportive to most new bands.

Dave: "The Luton punks were very friendly with gangs of punks from other surrounding cities—notably St. Albans, Leighton Buzzard, and Bedford. So we teamed up with other bands from these towns and all started organizing gigs for each other, as well as Hunt Sabbing together. We met Wat Tyler at one such gig in Cheddington. It must have been one of their first ever gigs. I subsequently ran into Sean (vocals/drums) everywhere I went and I have a feeling he introduced me to bands like the Assassins of Hope, who arranged our first London gigs.

"In those days I used to hitch or bunk the trains down to London (in fact all round the country) most weekends to the Anarchist Centre in Wapping, Centro Iberico, etc., where I met loads of people from other bands and we'd basically swap gigs. This meant a lot of bands coming to Luton to play at gigs we'd organized, then we'd play in their cities in return. It was a great way to get started."

Whatever deep meanings they gave at the time for choosing such an evocative name, now seems to do with the game many bands seemed to play, picking an outrageous name and seeing if they could justify it when asked.

Dave: "I always hated the name. I thought it was trite and juvenile. We probably tried to explain it away in some pretentious manner, but it was just pants really. The only good thing about the name was it meant we could use strap lines on posters and stuff, like 'What is your position?'

"With a name like that perhaps we should have gone more sexual. You know, Sex music for …er, Karma people. OK, maybe not. By the mid-'80s, political correctness (something we punks almost invented) was rife and we were terrified of being ostracized for saying something sexist. In some people's minds at the time, sex and sexism were virtually the same thing. We later wrote a couple of songs about sex and sexual liberation, but with a name like Karma Sutra perhaps we should have done more. A whole album about sexual politics perhaps."

The band began playing out and soon found a kinship with UK Decay, another local group that already had some success, especially with the classic single "For My Country."

Dave: "Early gigs were exactly what you'd expect. Terrible, but great fun. We seemed to play in a lot of pubs, normally in Luton, Bedford, and the St. Albans area. We slowly got better as we learned to play a bit, but it took a while.

"UK Decay was great. I was a huge fan and used to hitch all over the country watching them. They were also great people. I learned a lot watching them. Abbo was a brilliant singer and a great stage presence. Very charismatic. I remember hearing a story that they were offered a chance to hype one of their singles up into the charts, but they turned it down. Admirable, but a bit of a pity, because they deserved to have been even bigger than they were.

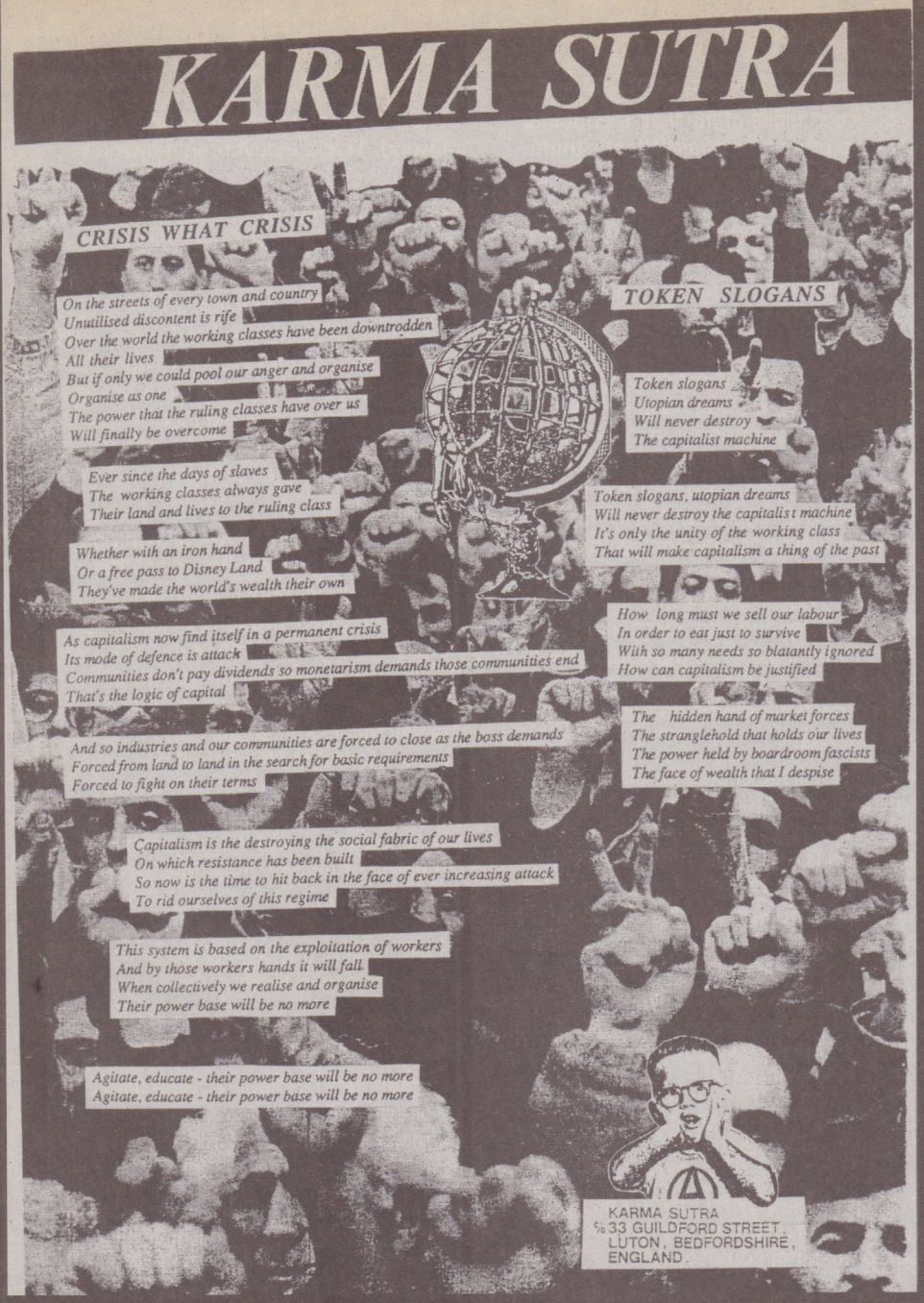
"Spon, UK Decay's guitarist, became our unofficial sound engineer/producer. He twiddled the buttons on our album, *Daydreams of a Production Line Worker*, and went on tour with us around Italy and Switzerland. Decay's drummer, Steve, was a great bloke too. We went out with the same girl. Not at the same time, I might add."

Early Karma Sutra was raw punk with heavy bass rhythms and crisp, distorted guitar playing. Clearly a punk band, the earliest incarnations of the band even had something of a New Model Army sound. This early version of the band managed to release some demo recordings.

Dave: "There were only two demo tapes, *The Shoppers Paradise* and *Karma Sutra*. We recorded a demo version of a song called 'The Package' (for an anti-nuclear compilation tape of local bands that I put together, called *Dump It on Parliament*) and another track for a Nicaraguan solidarity album (again with Spon on the mixing duty). But that I think was it."

At a time when bands were encouraged to be self-sufficient, Karma Sutra were broke, preventing any early singles or EPs.

Dave: "We really should have released a couple of singles before the LP. It was a major mistake looking back on it, but it's too late now. A couple of singles would have promoted the album and the band and we might have sold a few more copies. But unfortunately we never had any money. We were all on the dole. The band cost us money, practice rooms, equipment, van hire, etc., and virtually every gig we ever played was a benefit for someone or other. So we never made a penny, so we couldn't release anything."



Through a friendship with Conflict, the group made their first vinyl outings on 1984's *Who? What? Why? When? Where?* and 1985's *We Don't Want Your Fucking Law* compilation LPs.

Dave: "We did a couple of tracks for Mortarhate compilations. They were good practice."

As was the case with most compilations of the time, there were no royalty statements to be divided. On the rare occasion a compilation made any money, there was usually some cause to be donated to.

Dave: "Although we never received a single penny from either compilation, we were always grateful to Conflict for giving us the opportunity to record those. Even if they did totally balls up the second one.

"We had a good relationship with Conflict. A lot of people were slagging them off at the time, but I'd like to think we could have stood shoulder to shoulder with them, fighting skinheads if we hadn't all been such cowards."

The first compilation came with one of Karma Sutra's handouts as part of the lyric sheet.

What is your position?
...to watch such wars as these
Is to lose a part of myself
The reasons I wonder why
I felt so brave
When a soldier
Ready to vanquish the foe
The wrongs of theirs the things to crush
The banners proclaimed fight for freedom

The Karma Sutra track, "It's Our World Too," was one of the more memorable parts of the record.

The world's not theirs to buy or sell
The world's not theirs to blow to hell
It's not just theirs
It's ours as well

But these compilations were not without their complications.

Dave: "We did the *Who? What? Why? Where? When?* track called 'It's Our World Toooooo!' which was lyrically just a bit too Zounds for comfort, but it did us the world of good to actually release something.

"The other one on *We Don't Want Your Fucking War*—or was it *Law*? Shit, who cares? I clearly remember Hagar the Womb taking the piss as I was trying to do the vocals: 'Come on David, you're our man, if you can't do it no one can.' They'd just recorded their infamous 'If You Put That on the Record, I'll Fucking Kill You' track, so they were all clearly still buzzing. I liked them a lot. They were great fun. Pity our paths didn't cross more often.

"When we recorded 'How the Other Half Die', there was a bit of spoken dialogue that was meant to go before the song. It was something I'd taped off TV. We left the tape with the engineer, who lined it up completely wrong and subsequently it makes absolutely no sense whatsoever. I can't believe no one noticed at the time. First we knew about it was when we bought a copy of the album from our local record shop. Do you think that's how most bands work?

"I liked the song, but it desperately needed a bit more work. Some backing vocals for a start."

While the Karma Sutra was clearly a competent punk band, in the subsequent two years they took a huge leap in musical sophistication. By the release of their debut LP in 1987, they had become a group with a musical diversity rivalling Chumbawamba. Clearly there was some influence with the musical male/female vocals and the introduction of non-standard punk instrumentation (flutes and stuff). Whatever the reason, in the time it took them to raise the funds to release their one and only LP, the band

had clearly evolved musically in a unique direction.

Dave: "When we did eventually find a few quid, we worked out that an album would be almost as cheap as a couple of singles—if we rehearsed and didn't mess up and were in and out of the studio in record time. That was the plan and more or less what we did, which is why there are so many mistakes on the album. There's one song on there, one of the slower ones (don't ask me what it was called), it was meant to change gear and speed up half way through, but we forgot and cocked up. No wonder *Maximum Rocknroll* described it as 'Brit-plod'."

Daydreams of a Production Line Worker, the record a lot of people thought would put the group in the same league as Chumbawamba, was released in 1987. Packed with information, political and ideological, there was virtually no technical information, including band members or recording data. Presumably, the LP was recorded at Cabaret Voltaire's Western Works studio in Sheffield.

Dave: "The rehearsal room we used to use was a tatty old place above a printer's and a Chinese restaurant. The space was owned by another local band called Click Click. They'd previously recorded an album in the same place. I think it was owned by one of Cabaret Voltaire. Anyway, it worked out cheaper to travel and stay in Sheffield, than record it anywhere south of the Watford Gap. A bloke called Jesus let us all crash in his flat. Well, at least it wasn't a stable.

"I remember the studio being infested with rats, which might have been one of the reasons it was so cheap."

The band was constantly broke, so the self-released LP was partly made possible by a manufacturing and distribution deal sorted out by Chumbawamba.

Dave: "We were paradoxical. The band chipped in the money. My Grandad died around that time and left me £500 in his will. I threw that in the pot and never saw a penny of it again. That was my contribution. Graeme worked as a printer, so he probably worked and saved up. No idea where John got his share from.

"Chumba put us in contact with The Cartel, who distributed it for us. I remember having to stuff the booklet and poster inside every single record sleeve ourselves."

There is something quintessentially '80s-sounding about the production of this record. Part of it has to do with the sauced-up, wet drum sounds. The production tricks of the time meant that with the proper outboard effects, three well-placed microphones on a drum kit can sound the same as Kajagoogoo. Or perhaps it's the other way around. In fact, electronic effects gloss over most of that production style with chorus pedals on the guitars and reverb on…well, everything else.

Karma Sutra's LP is melodic, but if it's at all like Chumbawamba in structure, it's more like their eerier, minor-key moments; there's not much on this LP that could be confused with pop music. Moments are reminiscent of Theatre of Hate or New Model Army with male/female vocals somewhere between No Defences and Toxic Waste. The addition of keys, flute, and acoustic guitar both soften the music while making it unlike anything else in the genre. Add some folky, acappella moments and you get the general idea.

Another stylistic choice particular to this type of band at this moment in time is the use of samples. Unlike in hip hop, where sampling is used to create beats and measures, many anarcho groups of the later '80s (Chumbawamba, Thatcher On Acid, even Conflict) used sound bytes recorded from the news, documentaries, or political speeches to emphasize points, ironic or otherwise, and to add a new kind of distortion. It was pop audio collage.

Lyrically, the record (and accompanying "A Consumer's Guide…" booklet) focused on Situationist-influenced politics, meaning that the philosophical and ideological rants also came off as personal, if not confessional.

Dave: "I'm not sure there was actually any deliberate theme to the album. We were all experimenting with various forms of anarchism at the time and I think the album reflects that. A year later, or a year earlier, it might have been a very different record altogether. There was a definite shift in later years by some members of the band, from Green Anarchism and Situationism, towards Class War. So I guess it just reflects our collective views at that time.

"None of us except Graeme had jobs, so we weren't exactly production-line workers, but we'd all done enough shitty jobs between us to quantify that kind of first-person perspective referred to in the title. Perhaps what we were saying, if there was a theme, was that our daydreams were not of money and big houses and fancy cars, but a better, more equal, caring, sharing kind of world. That's a daydream I haven't relinquished."

The aforementioned booklet read like an issue of *Spectacular Times* with lyrics mixed in.

No longer do we view the self as something to be freely discovered in the dark infinite corridors of the mind, where, in unexplored rooms, adventure awaits, where undisturbed virgin thoughts and karmas remain incarcerated, and in candlelit sanctuaries of matter, dominant lie.

Dave: "Like the album, we all contributed towards it. I guess most of it was down to me and John, but Graeme definitely wrote a chunk or two; and being a printer, he took care of that side of things as well. Lil did a lot of the typing. I did the artwork. Neil's job in the band was to sort out all the electrical stuff, so although he doesn't get mentioned much when it comes to writing and creativity, he was always busy with his soldering iron, mending leads and amps and things. Graeme was in charge of money, making sure the rehearsal room was paid for, and John and I sorted out most of the gigs. Lil and Jo did most of the driving. So between us all, we managed to get everything done.

"It was actually a very good set up. We worked pretty well together for a while."

The first track, "Roleplay," sets up a lot of the record with its chiming guitar harmonics, melodic minor keys, and drums half punk and half tribal.

Give the boy a gun
Give the girl a doll
Basic training for their futures
They'll play out their roles
You're cast in a die
Inflexible to change
Your ears are closed to new ideas
A bigot remains

Dave: "I guess it must have been the song we were playing first at gigs or something. I can't quite remember. We just recorded our 'set' as it was at the time. John was always a bit of a sod for getting bored with what he was playing. By the time Neil and I had learned our parts, he was already refusing to play that song any more. I came close to strangling him on many occasions.

"'Roleplay' was one of Graeme's songs. John, Graeme, and I all wrote lyrics

and tunes, but whereas John and I were always a bit competitive and argued a lot with each other, Graeme just quietly got on with it. I always loved the sound of his guitar. I thought he had a really distinctive style. If you listen to the album you can easily tell the two guitars apart. I liked that. The ropey acoustic bits are me. Sorry!"

With much of the more straightforward punk and hardcore bands becoming more and more codified and uniform, it seemed like Karma Sutra was part of a new trend of anarcho bands like Chumbawamba, Thatcher On Acid, and others that purposefully tried to move away from more predictable punk noise. But within the band, the notion wasn't nearly as contrived.

Dave: "I was never convinced anarcho punk was just hundreds of Crass imitators. Look at Zounds, The Sears, The Mob, Chumbawamba, Omega Tribe, Rudimentary Peni, No Defences, Hagar the Womb, Amebix, et al. There were actually a lot of very distinctive sounding bands. There was a lot of crap too, obviously (and many people would include us in that pile), but there was some really good stuff too.

"I think for us, the music was less important than the scene. The gigs, the community, the whole counterculture was what really mattered.

"I guess we did try to be original, though whether or not we actually achieved this is debatable. We certainly started out sounding very Crass-like, but I think as we went on we started to find our own sound.

"I guess things like the slides and film we used at gigs might have made us look a little different from most bands on stage (although we did have the regulation black canvas clothing), but half the time they didn't work or there wasn't enough plug sockets. How many Super 8mm projectors did we get though? It would have been considerably easier these days."

The broad range of styles on the record did quite accurately reflect the different musicians' interests at the time. Though it's a long way from the Damned to U2 to Chumbawamba, it's possible to hear bits and pieces all over *Daydreams*.

Dave: "If I'm being totally honest, Chumba was a big influence on us. Hearing them allowed us to experiment with slower, folkier songs.

"Our musical influences were pretty diverse. John was into Slave Dance, Killing Joke, and U2. Graeme was into Wire and stuff like that. I was a big SLF fan and Neil was into Discharge. I guess the one band that we all loved was the Damned, especially their *Machine Gun Etiquette / Black Album* period."

The closing track, "Masters and Slaves," was a favorite of the group.

Ancestors patrimony
together to overcome
Their Victorian
philosophies are
obsolete
Ours is a world
believing in the ruins
We're taking control of
our own destiny
Fighting
Rebuilding a new
communality
Never again will we
kiss the feet of the
masters

Dave: "'Masters and Slaves' was our favorite song to play live, but I guess 'The Package' is the most important song on the album because that's the track that brought the band to a close.

"For the album (and the earlier demo version for the comp tape), we brought in a couple of friends of ours to help out. A guy called Sticky played cello and Lil played the flute. In retrospect this was a huge fucking mistake.

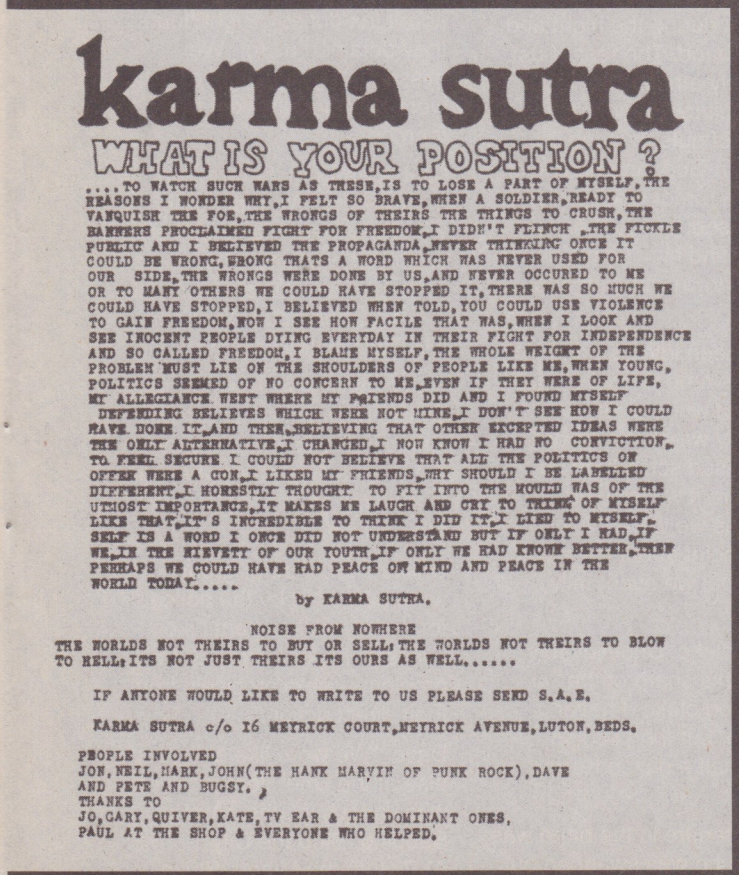
"After the album was finished, Lil continued coming to practices and basically joined the band by stealth. None of us had the guts to kick her out. Lil's arrival meant we had to try and squeeze in either more flute or more singing parts for her. I must admit, I hated both. I thought we were a much better band before the album, when we were punkier, rawer, and far more aggressive. I was always encouraging John to play louder and faster, but by then we had Lil and her fucking flute to accommodate. It was inevitable we'd get wimpier. During our dying days we bought in another drummer who again was far too tame for my liking, but by then I was totally outnumbered and losing every argument. So that was that.

"'The Package' was definitely the start of the end. It was our very own 'My Friend Stan.'"

Unlike Slade, the LP was mostly publicized by word of mouth or through xeroxed adverts that flooded the massive correspondence happening in anarcho punk.

Dave: "The album kind of dibbled out very slowly. I was always under the impression that no one had ever heard of us or knew anything about us. I didn't think we'd made any kind of impression at all and to be completely honest I can't for the life of me believe anyone will ever read this.

"As I said earlier, if we'd have released a couple of singles first, then maybe the album might have sold a bit better.



karma sutra

WHAT IS YOUR POSITION ?

....TO WATCH SUCH WARS AS THESE,IS TO LOSE A PART OF MYSELF,THE REASONS I WONDER WHY,I FELT SO BRAVE,WHEN A SOLDIER,READY TO VANQUISH THE FOE,THE WRONGS OF THEIRS THE THINGS TO CRUSH,THE BANNERS PROCLAIMED FIGHT FOR FREEDOM,I DIDN'T FLINCH ,THE FICKLE PUBLIC AND I BELIEVED THE PROPAGANDA,NEVER THINKING ONCE IT COULD BE WRONG,WRONG THATS A WORD WHICH WAS NEVER USED FOR OUR SIDE,THE WRONGS WERE DONE BY US,AND NEVER OCCURED TO ME OR TO MANY OTHERS WE COULD HAVE STOPPED IT,THERE WAS SO MUCH WE COULD HAVE STOPPED,I BELIEVED WHEN TOLD,YOU COULD USE VIOLENCE TO GAIN FREEDOM,NOW I SEE HOW FACILE THAT WAS,WHEN I LOOK AND SEE INOCENT PEOPLE DYING EVERYDAY IN THEIR FIGHT FOR INDEPENDENCE AND SO CALLED FREEDOM,I BLAME MYSELF,THE WHOLE WEIGHT OF THE PROBLEM MUST LIE ON THE SHOULDERS OF PEOPLE LIKE ME,WHEN YOUNG, POLITICS SEEMED OF NO CONCERN TO ME,EVEN IF THEY WERE OF LIFE, MY ALLEGIANCE WENT WHERE MY FRIENDS DID AND I FOUND MYSELF DEFENDING BELIEVES WHICH WERE NOT MINE,I DON'T SEE HOW I COULD HAVE DONE IT,AND THEN,BELIEVING THAT OTHER EXCEPTED IDEAS WERE THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE,I CHANGED,I NOW KNOW I HAD NO CONVICTION, TO FEEL SECURE I COULD NOT BELIEVE THAT ALL THE POLITICS ON OFFER WERE A CON,I LIKED MY FRIENDS,WHY SHOULD I BE LABELLED DIFFERENT,I HONESTLY THOUGHT TO FIT INTO THE MOULD WAS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE,IT MAKES ME LAUGH AND CRY TO THINK OF MYSELF LIKE THAT,IT'S INCREDIBLE TO THINK I DID IT,I LIED TO MYSELF, SELF IS A WORD I ONCE DID NOT UNDERSTAND BUT IF ONLY I HAD,IF WE,IN THE NIEVETY OF OUR YOUTH,IF ONLY WE HAD KNOWN BETTER,THEN PERHAPS WE COULD HAVE HAD PEACE OF MIND AND PEACE IN THE WORLD TODAY.....

by KARMA SUTRA.

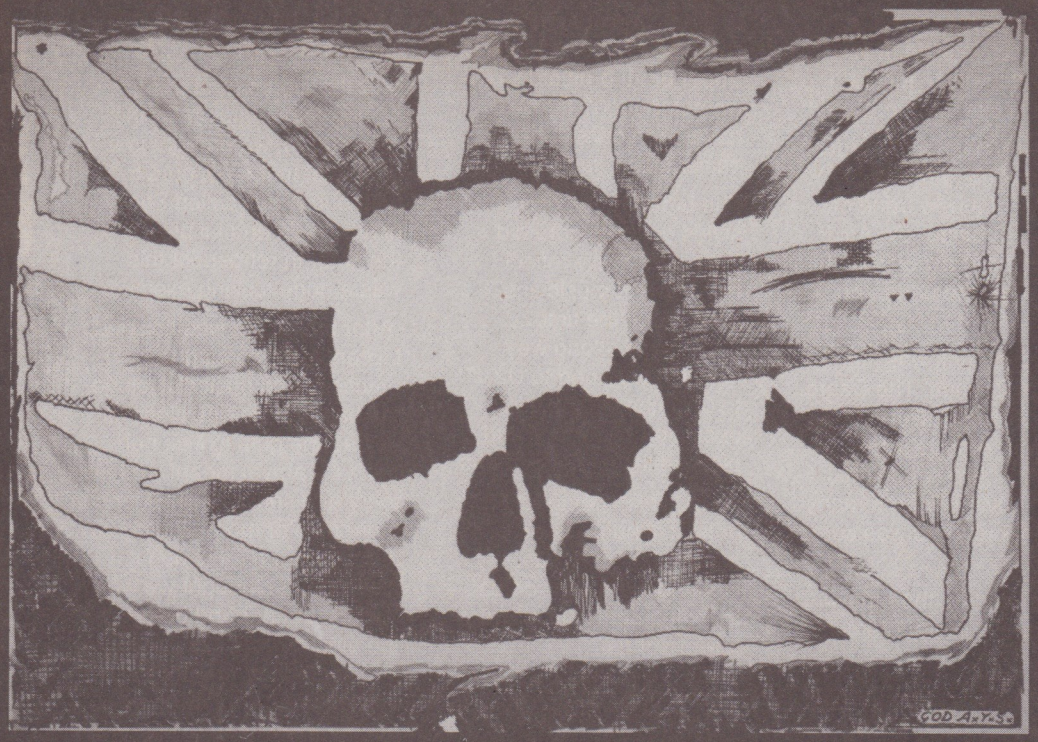
NOISE FROM NOWHERE

THE WORLDS NOT THEIRS TO BUY OR SELL,THE WORLDS NOT THEIRS TO BLOW TO HELL;ITS NOT JUST THEIRS ITS OURS AS WELL.....

IF ANYONE WOULD LIKE TO WRITE TO US PLEASE SEND S.A.E.

KARMA SUTRA c/o 16 MEYRICK COURT,MEYRICK AVENUE,LUTON,BEDS.

PEOPLE INVOLVED
JON,NEIL,MARK,JOHN(THE HANK MARVIN OF PUNK ROCK),DAVE AND PETE AND BUGSY.
THANKS TO
JO,GARY,QUIVER,KATE,TV EAR & THE DOMINANT ONES, PAUL AT THE SHOP & EVERYONE WHO HELPED.



By the time the first print run had sold out, the band had spilt up and no more were ever pressed.

"I have seen pirate CD copies being sold on the net, but I've no idea who's behind it. Good luck to them, but please give any money you make off of the album to a worthy cause."

As you might imagine from his overall tone, Dave isn't especially fond of the record today.

Dave: "I haven't heard it for at least 15 years and without wishing to sound arsey, I have no desire to listen to it now. My singing is so poor, that I just can't bring myself to play it. To be honest I'm not even sure if I still have a copy. I don't have a record player anyway.

"I'm sure if I heard it now I would still hate it. In fact there was stuff I hated when we first did it. We had a big argument at one point because I wanted to go back and change a couple of bits. I eventually got my way, but not before a very heated exchange, a vote, and a toss of a coin. On that day Neil was the main obstacle. Fuck knows why. Anyway, we did go back to Sheffield and repair a couple of bits. But not enough!"

It was at this point in 1987, when they were meant to tour on the record, that drummer Wayne Sturgeon had an epiphany. Converting to Christianity, he definitely took a different path. Becoming a poet, he published *Adam's Playtime: Reflections on the Free Spirit and Alchemical Anarchism* and *Christianarchy: a Primer to Christian Anarchism*.

Dave: "I didn't know about the book, I'll have to track down a copy. But the rest is certainly true. Wayne was part of the band, living with us all. He left after we recorded the album, but before it was released. We woke up one morning and he was gone. God had come to him during the night and told him to leave the band. The rest of us were very aggressively atheist so it must have been very difficult for Wayne at the time and it took a lot of guts to stand up and say he believed in God, amongst such company. I did hear a rumor that he didn't want the album released, but by then we didn't know where to find him, so we never got the chance to sit down with him and discuss it.

"Wayne might have been interested to know that at the same time we were seriously talking about whether or not we should deliberately wreck the record ourselves. We discussed scratching up the master copy before it went to the pressing plant. I guess we were thinking about making some point about the music not being important, but we eventually abandoned the idea.

"Wayne was a good bloke. Unbelievably untidy and never did his share of the washing up, but a good bloke. I never heard from him again, but then I could say the same about half a dozen Karma drummers."

Needless to say, his tenure in the band was coming to a close, so he was swapped out for Chumbawamba's drummer, Harry.

Dave: "We did a tour of Italy and Switzerland not long after its release. Harry from Chumba came with us. Spon came on tour with us too, as did a good friend of ours called Paul, who we used to go Hunt Sabbing with. They shared the arduous driving duties.

"Harry and Spon introduced me to the work of Vivian Stanshall on this tour. For that reason alone, I'm bloody glad we did it. I've been a huge fan ever since."

This one and only tour would turn out disastrously for the band and may be partly why this record is so hard to find today.

Dave: "A van full of sweaty punks pulled over by armed cops who don't speak any English. The van and all our luggage was torn to pieces as they hunted for drugs. We were all strip-searched. Bend over, look up the arse, try not to fart. All the usual stuff. They confiscated a bunch of albums we had with us (something about tax duties). Eight hours they detained us for. We missed a gig that night and were desperately skint from then on.

"But apart from that we had a great time. We met some wonderful people and played a couple of cracking gigs, one at the top of a mountain in Zurich in a squatted hotel. That one will always stay with me."

It's possible that those hundred copies of *Daydreams* are still sitting in some Swiss locker on a mountainside somewhere like in the final scene of *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.

Unlike a lot of other groups who were harassed by the police for their lyrical content (like Crass or Flux), Karma Sutra's problems came precisely from their direct action.

Dave: "We were like everybody else at the time, very involved with various issues. Hunt Sabbing, Stop the City, ALF stuff, the Miners Strike,

the Wapping Print Workers dispute, Molesworth and Greenham, Anti-Apartheid, etc. We were always getting nicked and we certainly saw our share of police brutality.

"John got beaten up in the cells one night in London after some demo and I was also bashed about in a police van after the big Conflict gig at the Brixton Academy.

"Wayne and I were both taken to court for selling Class War and fined £50 each. How's that for free speech? And Graeme got done for dancing on a Rolls Royce."

For whatever reason, after the LP the band began to slow down. Before the end of 1987 they did appear on the *God Save Us from the USA* compilation LP with Culture Shock and Zounds.

Dave: "Later there was a Nicaraguan Solidarity album. Spon recorded it for us on some rudimentary 8-track machine as live in our practice room. The title 'Let Them Eat Samozas' (a reference to the ruling Nicaraguan royal Samoza family) was far better than the song, which was basically just a load of spare rifts randomly spliced together for no apparent reason. I think by then it was apparent to everyone that we'd seen better days."

After that, only two more tracks were ever released. "Crisis? What Crisis?" on *Airstrip One UK* on Mystic Records came out in 1988 with the Instigators and Oi Polloi. That same song was re-released a year later along with "Tokan Slogans" on the *Life Is Change* LP on Beri Beri with the Ex, HDQ and EA80. A set list from an April 1988 show at Swansea University has them mostly still playing the LP with the only additions of "Clause 29" and "Crisis." It seemed like a second LP wouldn't be forthcoming.

Dave: "It would have been nice. We learned a lot from the first album but I think once we introduced that fucking flute into the band we were in trouble and it was probably best that we ended when we did—before we turned into Jethro Tull.

"John and I appeared on a rare and very hard to find album called *Sportchestra: 101 Songs about Sport*, which was put together by Chumba. It's well worth a listen if you can find a copy."

Pretty soon members began drifting and the band was in its last stages.

Dave: "Neil, Bugsy (percussion) and myself all left at the same time. Neil and Bugs had had enough of Luton and decided to move out to Southern Ireland. Last I heard they were still there.

"The band did one or two more gigs in the UK and a short tour in the US, with John, Graeme, and Lil plus a new drummer and bass player. But they split up as soon as they got back home."

In addition to musical ennui, there were political tensions that probably had the most to do with the group coming apart.

Dave: "The last incarnation of Karma Sutra split because the new drummer went off to Australia and the rest of the band was too fucking lazy to look for a new one. Perhaps it had just run its course by then.

"As I said already, I think the band was struggling from the minute we introduced the flute. But as well as musical differences, there were some very obvious political differences starting to appear with Neil, Bugsy, and myself on one side and Graeme, Lil, and John on the other.

"Class War was very big at the time and Graeme, John, and Lil (plus many of our friends outside the band) got very into Class War. They even edited an issue of the paper. I argued that although I agreed theoretically with the basic principles of Class War, I wasn't prepared to join any kind of party, sign up to any kind of manifesto, or tow any party line. By this time the Class War paper wasn't funny anymore. Ian Bone and the people who had started it had long since gone and the new guys (including Karma members) were all taking it very seriously. There was something about Class War at that time that reminded me very much of the SWP, whom I had encountered many years earlier as a school kid. I remember asking Lil a question about Northern Ireland one day and she turned to Graeme and asked what was the Class War position on the subject. And that was my point, exactly. They had stopped thinking for themselves and were now relying on the party to do it for them. I hated that!

"The local Class War group had also adopted an attitude of turning their noses up at travelers and squatters. As a band that regularly played squat gigs, traveled with the Peace Convoy, and had many friends living on the road, it just didn't feel right to be a part of that. The whole thing felt divisionary to me. We were no longer just anarchists—we were Class War supporters or Situationists or Greens or crusty traveler types. To me that was the same kind of SWP/RCP type shit that had divided the Left for years.

"But this is all ancient history now. So if anyone else ever asks, it was musical differences."

With the band split, the institution maintaining their friendships did as they all lost contact with each other.

Dave: "I haven't really spoken to any of them since leaving the band (apart from briefly at some anarcho do about ten years ago). I once spotted Graeme on an Anti-Nazi demo and once bumped into Neil (and Bugsy's brother) on the streets of Dublin. We had a drummer called Craig, who later joined Scum of Toytown. I went to see them play one night. But that's about it.

"I'd like to hope that if any of them died or really needed help, the others would track me down and let me know. We were, after all, at one point all very good mates."

Having spent time working on Blue Peter and now a talented erotic photographer, Dave doesn't reflect much on the old anarcho days.

Dave: "I don't reflect on them often, but I certainly don't think they were a waste of time. I made a lot of good friends around that period and I think we all made a difference. The '80s were a very political time, culminating in the poll tax riot, the end of Thatcher and, love it or loathe it, Live Aid. Much that has since seeped into mainstream thinking was spawned during the Punk Wars."

Still the free thinker, the lessons learned in Karma Sutra aren't lost on him.

Dave: "The world has changed, obviously, so I hope my thinking has evolved subsequently. Sadly I'm far less active than I used to be. I'd be hard-pushed to run about Hunt Sabbing these days. My old bones wouldn't take it.

"But if you are asking if I still consider myself an anarchist, then the answer is a big fat YES! You'll never take me alive, coppers!

"Hopefully that (and this) will be the last you ever hear of Karma Sutra."

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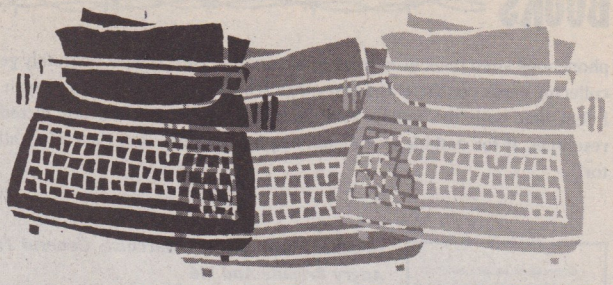
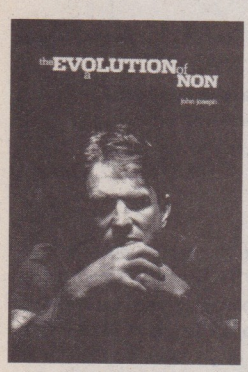




The Evolution of a Cro-Magnon
John Joseph
428 pages • $20
Punkhouse
www.punkhouse.org

The Evolution of a Cro-Magnon is about a lot more than the puerile and publicized turmoil within the OG Mag army, which is refreshing. After reading the "Cro-Mag saga," a chapter that Joseph reserved for the last couple hundred pages, I was glad it took up as little of the book as it did. Their story, like the rest of the book, was definitely enthralling, but Joseph's account of what went down between band members really differs in principle very slightly from others I've heard. One night in NYC Kevin Mitchell Mayhew (Parris to me) told me his version of the Cro-Mags saga and, as I recall, it was, at its core, surprisingly not that different than the account given by Joseph in the book. Just like Joseph, Parris felt slighted, victimized and taken advantage of. And just like Joseph these feelings, in the end, targeted Harley as they're source. It's a triangulation, where two people identify, momentarily reconciling at the expense of the third; Harley and Joseph identify and momentarily reconcile at the expense of Mayhew, Mayhew and Harley at the expense of Joseph, ad infinitum. The means of ending this cycle (forgiveness) is identified by Joseph and temporarily embraced. In 2005, with spiritual progress in mind, Joseph decides to try something different by making amends and forgiving Harley. The reconciliation is short-lived and the enmity between them persists. On and on and on and on. Pretty redundant.

Considering that the Cro-Mags traditionall-y "show no mercy" and don't forgive, Joseph's constant return to a spiritual solution complicates the stereotypical Cro-Mag image. And when I say complicate I mean he risks being seen all soft like an uptown chump! In trying to forgive, he suspends his attachment to the (stereotypical) Cro-Mag image, espousing spiritual principles in favor of that fucking tough guy bullshit that caused so much wreckage throughout his life. It's not that he disavows the Cro-Mag identity. Sometimes he fucking basks in it! But he also complicates it, makes it more authentic, by showing its spiritual roots.

What I've always found most seductive about the Cro-Mags is the contrasting imagery of "the streets" and "the spiritual." That's what, aside from the music of course, makes the band so intriguing and distinctive in the history of hardcore. And the source of this complex, Cro-Mag character is definitely and almost entirely Joseph (although you'd never know since Harley's mug and little demon chest tattoo dominates the Mags' photo documentation). Joseph introduced the band to Krishna consciousness and wrote most of the lyrics, along with the original singer Eric Cassanova (who I believe isn't credited on *Age of Qaurrel*). In the end Joseph survived street life by turning to religion, but his conversion to spiritual living was anything but smooth. It was wrought through and through with doubt and periods of disbelief, with addiction and violence, and, indeed, an addiction to violence, dysfunction, and hustling.

Much of the book chronicles Joseph's youth and young adulthood. Growing up in the New York State foster care system, Joseph experienced a lot of violence—emotional, physical, sexual. He'd already experienced physical violence prior to foster care, while living with his biological mother and father. The sexual violence, however, occurred while in the custody of a particularly fucking sick family. In this disclosure of sexual abuse, Joseph is at his most vulnerable and most complex. And, simultaneously, he appears atop an apex of strength, having surmounted the stereotypical Cro-Mag image to claim this dark past as necessary in his course of evolution.

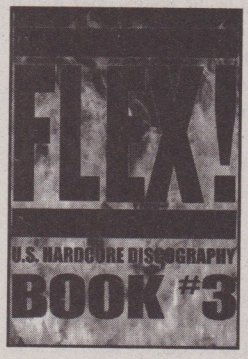
Homeless in his early-teens, Joseph quickly learned the art of hustling to survive, an art he continues to practice I might add (a cookbook dude?). Throughout the book he provides plenty of background on the refinement of his hustle, discussing a bizarre and sometimes ridiculous bunch of street personalities (such as "Computer" and "Mikey Debris" and "Airborne Paratrooper JK"). He sold and did lots of drugs, especially dust, and this activity led him to witness a fucking brutal murder and nearly get violently raped at a young age. But the most interesting series of hustles had to be while he was a devotee.

I didn't know that upon going AWOL from the Navy and before joining the Cro-Mags, Joseph was a Hare Krishna devotee (i.e. monk) for a considerable amount of time. He lived in an ashram, went by a devotional name (Jayananda Dasa), had a guru, wore dhotis, etc. He also hustled hard for ISKCON, becoming nothing more than a crook with a spiritual alibi. One of his hustles while at the temple was to solicit donations from people in grocery stores by pretending to be a wheelchair bound—retarded Santa Claus! Crazy, right? Though absurd, Joseph comes across as being pretty fucking honest throughout the book. He refers to ISKCON as a cult and now feels he was brainwashed by its leaders, thereby establishing (even if somewhat suspect) credibility for himself. The book is dedicated to Srila Prabhupada, and today Joseph embraces Krishna Consciousness. In fact, he's involved with an organization called the ISKCON Revival Movement. The IRM's mission is basically to try to rescue the message (i.e. the Vedas) from the messengers (i.e. gurus) so to speak, many of whom participated in an array of highly criminal activities throughout the '80s and early-'90s. Dudes, apparently Shelter's former guru is a pedophile! And they took him on tour!

Joseph, in traditional Cro-Mag fashion, has (or had perhaps??) a lot of opinions, ego, and judgmental thinking that does not reflect spiritual principles like love and tolerance. If you're sensitive to sexist and homophobic language, you're gonna get bent outta shape! Also, if you're looking for an old-timer who's aware of the lively HC/punk scene post-1986 or whatever, Joseph isn't that dude. He cannot see beyond the commodification of punk. It seems he's totally out of touch with the current DIY HC/punk scene. But, in reality, the Cro-Mags were kind of a major label commodity from the start anyway.

Toward the end of the book Joseph underscores the necessity of music and spirituality in his life. He says without those two things he's living in hell. At different points in the book Joseph remarks that people truly seek a spiritual solution not because they don't want to go to hell, but because they've been through it. I agree and can relate. The *Evolution of a Cro-Magnon* speaks to the punk; the lost and abused kid, seekers of a spiritual solution, and all people recovering from the illusions of our totally fucking diseased culture. Speaks to me! Good shit!

—Dan Butler



Flex!:
US Hardcore Discography, Book #3
Written & Edited by Burkhard Järisch
700+ pages
www.fuzzlogic.com/flex/

Here we have the third installment of the most extensive book ever about US punk and hardcore records. The first version *Flex!* was simply a collection of the issues of the zine of the same name that came out every so often, and originally included much of what is contained in these pages. What you will find inside are short and to the point little reviews in German and English, sleeve scans, pressing and variation info, and any other pertinent info about (almost) every record to come out of the US punk scene from '76 through the '90s. There is a lot missing from the '90s on, which is fine with me because the amount of information they have gathered from the earlier stuff is ridiculously thorough. While I may find a few of the write-ups to be more than just a little off base, they are in fact reviews, and the product of one person's opinion. For that I find no fault. Since the last printing of *Flex!*, they have tacked on an additional 1000+ new reviews mostly of records released from '76 to '85, making this

phonebook sized book even more of a monolith. *Flex!* is most definitely geared to the collector nerds out there and many may scoff at the general idea of such a book but I feel that both the online version and the printed book are incredibly useful resources, if for nothing else identifying bootlegs etc. (but I am, after all, a "collector").

—Justin Briggs

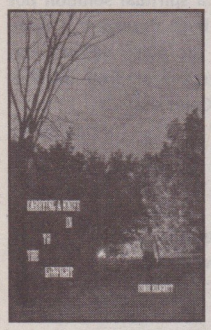
Granny Made Me An Anarchist: General Franco, The Angry Brigade And Me
Stuart Christie
410 pages • $19.95
AK Press
www.akpress.org

I really like to read biographies, and not just because it's way easier than hacking into your email account to see what you've been writing. It's really important for people from all walks of life to have access to the media, and for us to read things by people who are (mis)represented by the general media. So I was really stoked to get my hands on *Granny Made Me An Anarchist* because it seems like I've heard a lot about Stuart Christie, but I've never actually read his account of things.

Like a lot of famous anarchists who I am peripherally aware of, I'd never really given much thought to what made Christie decide to become active. (Stuart Christie, in case you forgot, was the dude who got arrested in Spain in 1964 for attempting to assassinate Franco. He later went to trial with the Angry Brigade, was involved in the Black Flag newspaper and the Anarchist Black Cross, and later founded Cienfuegos Press which was an anarchist publishing house, and now is involved with Christie Press.) So, I was excited about learning about his motivations, and his life deal.

Unfortunately, I was majorly bummed out by his writing style, which managed to make even the most interesting events extremely boring. I think that he was trying to make sure that everything was really clear, so a lot of unnecessary details, like how some guy he talked to resembled somebody on TV or whatever, were included. In fact, so many were included, that I found myself getting distracted by minor points, rather than remaining riveted by the story. That said, his story is really interesting, but this book might not be fun for somebody who isn't a big history fan. If you are a big history fan, though, you'll probably be way psyched.

—Thera Webb



Carrying a Knife In To the Gunfight
by Eddie Kilowatt
$12
Full Contact Publishing

Dude's wearing a white, ribbed tanktop on the cover, walking down the road towards a fire. What the hell's he carrying? Is it the knife mentioned in the book's title? Is that Eddie Kilowatt, the poet? There's a motorcycle on the back cover, blurry and evocative. The poetry I gravitate towards is similarly imagistic if not always clearly defined. With this particular book, I think you know what you're getting into. It's poetry, which scares off a sizeable portion of readers. From a tiny publisher—his name is Eddie Kilowatt & some of the poems were previously published in journals like *American Drivel Reviews, Cherry Bleeds, Outside Writers,* and *Thieves Jargon.* Poems here have titles like "Sarah Vaughan after a shit". But, I staff the monthly open-mic at the downtown public library, so my threshold for all kinds of poetry is pretty high.

Aside from the opening poem, "Daddy Went to Harvard," the poems here are anecdotal. Conversational, like the verse that Black Sparrow (Bukowski, et al.) put out. Adjectives are rare. Multiple readings aren't needed to decode the abstruce symbology. But the poems probably sound pretty good read aloud. None are more than a page or two. You could finish the entire book over a few refills of coffee.

Most people probably won't want to read any book of poetry straight through though. It's too much to acclimate. Here the formula gets a bit repetitive. His end lines tend toward zingers—like bartender punchlines. Some of which are funny enough, and some are real groaners. What you might find more compelling is the occasional dialogues that pop-up like in "Mad at Miles" wherein you get:
"So you're mad at Miles too? He didn't beat you, did he?"
"I don't think abuse is something to joke about."
"I agree, I agree. I'm actually a very sensitive person. I've been abused before. I've even written poetry about it."
"Oh, you're so full of crap. You don't even get it."
"So now you're mad at me? What is it with you women getting mad at the men who never beat them?"

Same with "a fieldtrip" whereby our narrator gets accosted in the big city as a child "in the bathroom and three black guys with the t shirts on had small newspapers they wanted to sell us which confused me." Reading through, an old question returns—is poetry just sentences broken up into lines? These wouldn't work as anything but exactly what they are. Maybe as stand-up. Kilowatt is a cool-sounding punk name, but the poems here are more like 100-watt, which, you know, is still useful just not blinding.

—Travis Fristoe

Live at the Masque: Nightmare in Punk Alley
Compiled by Brendan Mullen
328 pages • $45.00
Gingko Press
www.gingkopress.com

I feel sometimes as if we are living in a post-*Fuck You Heroes* world, where Henry Rollins is wheeled out on demand to comment on something that happened 30 years ago or else *it didn't happen.* Coffee table books now exist covering every aspect of youth culture from kid's rocking Sergio jeans and Run DMC Adidas to a book of photos of Jay Adams skating taken by his step-dad, pre-Dogtown. If something hasn't been turned into a coffee table book does that mean it didn't actually happen? Nothing's real unless someone writes about it in a book. I am feeling kind of ambivalent about the historical society of punk rock happenings, recording everything and making their reports. I like the disposable aspect of punk culture. The fact that fanzines and tapes are transient and disappear and the newcomers have to make their own things or perish under the weight of reverence. But I guess the '80s and '90s were an endless baby boomer nostalgia party, and now turns out it's time for the punks to exhume their ancient relics for public consumption.

OK lecture over, this book rules. *Live At the Masque* was put together by the same publishing company that did the *Fucked up and Photocopied* books, so it looks amazing. It is similar to said book in that it covers a specific aspect of punk culture, a very short-lived venue. It also reminds me of the amazing *We're Desperate* book that came out a few years ago. *We're Desperate* is comprised of photos of punks at shows in the late-'70s with no identifying labels, thus giving the same importance to a random kid at a show as it did to say Exene or Darby, which obviously is one of the greatest things about punk rock. DIY! It is super clear that the audience is just as important as the bands in terms of scene construction and creativity.

Anyway, back to the book at hand. There are obviously pictures of bands playing music, and this is LA at it's earliest most creative art damaged time so we're talkin' Zeros, Dils, Screamers, Germs, Weirdos, Avengers, Mau Mau's, X, Go Go's, Dickies, Bags, Eyes, Black Randy & the Metro Squad, Plugz, Skulls, Controllers, The Alleycats, and many more. But in reference to my earlier reference (*We're Desperate*!) there are lots of photos of kids hanging out just being punks. And not only kids—this book captures an era before aggro beach town hardcore eradicated the weirdo "old" people. The older crowd gravitated towards art damaged sounds and ideas of hanging out. I love seeing the photos of people with weird '70s puffy long hair who haven't quite figured out how to dress like a punk, and haven't yet managed to shed their old stylings completely. The graffitti is also amazing, and seeing all the fliers and random ephemera that make up the punk rock experience is enough to make the least librarian types nerd out completely. I didn't know that Charlotte Caffey of the Go Go's was intitially in The Eyes... and there's photographic proof in here that she was! There's a great shot of a pre-icon Darby Crash, or rather Bobby Pyn? and he looks so young and not yet formed—it's kind of mind blowing.

Live at the Masque is a great documentation of a vivid period in music and cultural history that might not be possible in a post message-board-MySpace-over-blogged world. But that is kind of a depressing way to look at things. It may be the age of MySpace crust but that doesn't mean you can't make something as rad with your weirdo friends, as these people did so long ago. Don't let the weight of history and nostalgia documented in books like this keep you from making your own future, your own version of punk.

—Layla Gibbon

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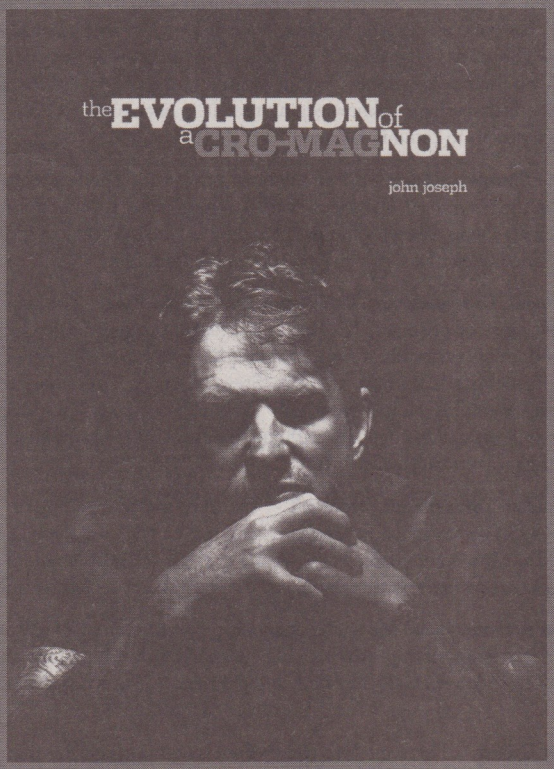
Email. unrestrecords@gmail.com

"This book kicked my ass."

- Adam Yauch (Beastie Boys)

CRO-MAGS' FRONTMAN John Joseph is best known for leading one of the most important bands in the punk hardcore scene. But on his way to becoming a NYHC legend, John faced homelessness, addiction, betrayal and insanity. Tragically, even breakthrough success couldn't save John from a relapse that sent him back to rock bottom. The book is a raw and unapologetic autobiography about his life.
Consider yourself warned.

Get it only at PUNKHOuse.org



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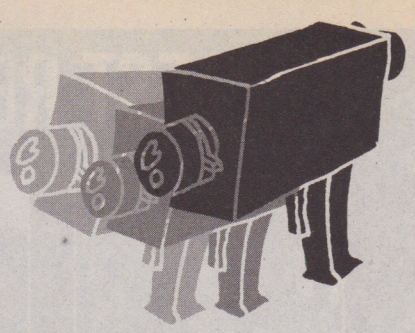


BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

As the President of the Punk Rock Film Critics Association™, it is that time of the year when I release our list of best films of 2007 in order to influence Academy nominations. Elsewhere in this issue of Maximum Rock N Roll the shit-workers are listing their favorite records so why not join in on the fun?
Here is the list of the Punk Rock Film Critics Association™ best films of 2007.

1. **Unknown Passage: The Dead Moon Story –** One of the most inspirational band documentaries ever. There are no drug problems, need for redemption, affairs with back-up singers, messy divorces, or other traditional rock star problems. After surviving then rejecting the mainstream music business, The Coles begin their unyielding DIY lifestyle. Sure some bands release their own records, but how many press their own? Never mind make their own instruments, houses, and towns.

2. Control – The very sad story of the lead singer of Joy Division Ian Curtis. Directed by Joy Division photographer Anton Corbijn in beautiful black and white. The band scenes are incredibly realistic with the actors actually playing the music. The story is based on the memoirs of Curtis' wife Deborah and focuses mostly on their personal life. Corbijn doesn't draw any conclusions. He just presents the facts perhaps acknowledging that it is impossible to know what really drives a person to commit suicide.

3. The Simspons Movie – More hilarious antics with The Simpsons' family, but now on the big screen. This time Homer endangers the town of Springfield when he illegally dumps his pig's shit into Lake Springfield. The same lake that previously killed Green Day. Plus full-frontal nudity from Bart.

4. Dreams To Remember: The Legacy Of Otis Redding – The simple, short yet fascinating story of singer Otis Redding. The film focuses on Redding's amazing live performances and the recollections of the few people who were close to him: his wife Zelma, his writing partner Steve Cropper, Stax founder Steve Jim Stewart, Memphis Horns' trumpeter Wayne Jackson and Redding's daughter Karla. It is an engrossing story without the usual trappings of band life, even if Redding's was cut tragically short.

5. Monks: Transatlantic Feedback – The very in-depth telling of The Monks' story—US GI's stationed in Germany who form a truly unique beat band. They dressed as Monks and used a banjo as one of the main instruments. The performance footage alone is worth seeing, but the story is equally fascinating.

6. You're Gonna Miss Me – The uncomfortably personal story of Roky Erickson, former lead singer of the 13th Floor Elevators. Every possible detail you might possibly want to know about the family life of Erickson. He is not the only eccentric one.

7. Fay Grimm – This sequel to. **Henry Fool** is a surprisingly fun film. It takes the idea of the sequel to a new, amazingly ridiculous level while maintaining an engrossing story. It is full of audacity for the sheer enjoyment of it and it works really well.

8. Inland Empire – David Lynch introduced the screening of **Inland Empire** I attended. Shockingly, but perhaps not surprisingly, he admitted he didn't have a story going into this film. He just had ideas for some scenes and knew the story would reveal itself. It does and if you follow it without worrying too much about what it means, you will really enjoy it.

9. Persepolis – The very personal story of Marjane Satrapi, a girl growing up in Iran during the Islamic Revolution. Marjane witnesses relatives and neighbors imprisoned and executed by the new regime. When she is sent to Vienna to attend boarding school, she becomes a friend with the school rebels, but soon is disillusioned when she realizes they have no idea what it is to really rebel.

10. Flight Of The Conchords – I know it is not technically a movie, but I can't help. I love these New Zealand rockers transplanted to New York City. They are innocent and overly sincere, but still manage to hilariously break into song at a minute's notice. Plus the songs have such funny lyrics.

Now on to some new stuff.

Nardwaur The Human Serviette Welcome To My Castle! DVD contains two more discs of Nardwaur shenanigans. Although his interactions with unsuspecting people (evangelist Ernest Angley, infomercialists Tommy Vu, and Anthony Robbins among others) are always funm his time around I am enjoying more the interviews with people who are familiar with his schick and therefore, take it upon themselves to harass and upset him. Sonic Youth are the best example. They tolerate his strange questions, but lash back at him by giving difficult answers and stealing his props.

The second disc of **Nardwaur The Human Serviette Welcome To My Castle!** features a bunch of interviews with Courtney Love, which begin with a Neil Hamburger-like joke about the Red Hot Chili Peppers. However, it is more interesting than Nardwaur's obsession with Snoop Dogg on his previous DVD **Doot Doola Doot Doo...Doot Doo!** Love begins by hating Nardwaur so much that she bans him from the backstage area even though he manages to get back there anyway. He eventually wins her over, getting a thoroughly in-depth, if at times off-kilter interview with Love. The interviews are shown in chronological reverse order that seems strange at first until you realize why it was done. Brilliant. (www.mintrecs.com)

Building A Broken Mousetrap is a live show DVD of the Dutch band The Ex shot in New York on September 11, 2004. The band performs at the Knitting Factory mere blocks away from the World Trade Center reconstruction. The first half of the performance is shot on 16mm in black and white. The second half is shot on DV in color. The band's performance is intense and exciting. It is unfortunately interspersed with generic shots of New York: cranes and construction workers at Ground Zero, traffic, skyscrapers, pawn shops, porn stores. There are also some shots of the Republican Convention and protests that took place two weeks before the show. (www.touchandgorecords.com)

Pretend It's Yesterday Again tells the story of a girl who after enduring the harassment of her friend and herself by two drunken losers finds herself overwhelmed by the need for revenge. She turns into the same type of person as her attacker and never has the chance to redeem herself. The film is only twenty minutes long. The plot may not progress in a logical way and the ending is unsatisfying, but the gore is fairly realistic. And I always enjoy seeing a women kick a guy's ass. (cpburrows@hotmail.com)

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0402. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area, let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. www.carolynkeddy.com

FINAL CUT BY STEVEN SPINALI

ARE YOU DEPRESSED YET?

Nanking is hardly an experimental film, but the kind of thing that's failed so often, sometimes painfully so it attracts special notice. Directed by Bill Guttentag and Dan Sturman, who have unusually strong progressive credentials, the film recounts the events surrounding the Japanese control of Nanking in 1937/8. The events left a profound impact on everyone who saw, experienced, or tried to stop them; its scope was so wide-ranging that new details are being uncovered to this day. Many of the original players in this drama have passed away, so in **Nanking**, others here take their place. A number of the players are fairly well known, but their transformation is surprising. Using diaries and accounts from Western missionaries, doctors, and journalists, as well as period interviews, we're privy to a narrative that's often disturbingly real.

In 1937, as Hitler has of course gained control over Germany, Japan required the resources of Asia in its own ambitious fit of empire-building. China was hardly unified, and lacked the resources to restore its identity. On the other hand, it was easy pickings for the growing Japanese empire. Shanghai was only the gateway; the Japanese military saw it as a necessary first step before an invasion of Nanking, a source of even greater wealth. The fall of Shanghai was relatively quick, and even the Japanese were surprised at their good fortune. The only people left in the city were either the poor, who couldn't afford to evacuate, or the old.

Several of the sequences shown give sense that bombing was indiscriminate. Shanghai has always been known for its stylish elegance, but several shots with landscapes of hollowed-out buildings almost gives the sense of a Hiroshima in scope. Japanese generals saw Shanghai was the warm-up act.

At that time, Nanking was probably the economic hub of China, and this made it particularly attractive for invaders. American newsreels mourned that bombs were now raining on central China, and as before, mostly on civilian targets. While the wealthy could escape with their few possessions, the ones left over weren't in a position to do much except wait in fear. Non-coms from the Japanese army had already begun a competition to determine how many Chinese they could decapitate; for the worst of them, the numbers were climbing into the hundreds. Certain Japanese soldiers developed a style that would allow them to dispatch their victims with particular efficiency.

Nanking avoids presenting the narrative in a typical fashion, here, the filmmakers do a more inventive job by intermixing early footage, interviews of survivors, and of course a collage of eye-witness accounts. Even Japanese soldiers are presented.

At first, the effect is not unlike watching a Ken Burns' documentary, and **Nanking** probably owes some of its storytelling flavor to this approach. But the use of actors, who sometimes look amazingly like the participants in the story, makes it seems as if the story is happening in the present tense. **Nanking** is a hybrid documentary, tying together every available snippet of primary information to make the story palpable. It's a cunning use of history and editing.

The Japanese advanced on Nanking simultaneously from different routes. No one was in a position to halt their progress, but in late 1937, a group of Westerners united to form a kind of "Safety Zone." In the absence of actual power, this cabal tried to get Japanese leadership to acknowledge the validity of the zone.

It doesn't hurt that the story contains more than its share of uncommonly heroic men and women; this group opted to stay in the city long after even most of the Chinese had left. George Fitch, a missionary, begins the narrative, obligated by conscience to tell everything he's seen and heard; he's the man who would find a way to crack Japan's campaign of propaganda and official silence.

John Rabe, an executive for Siemans in China, was perhaps the most influential of the group. On one hand, he was a German with ties to the Nazi leadership; on the other, he was the man who drafted compacts to save as many Chinese in "the Neutral Zone" as possible. Initially, most of his group had second thoughts about Rabe and his dubious connections. Eventually, during an especially dark time, the Chinese pronounced him as a living Buddha; he alone was instrumental in saving as many as 250,000 Chinese. Much later, when he went to Germany to complain about Nanking to Hitler, he was shuffled away by the Nazi before he could say a word.

Minnie Vautrin, a missionary at Ginling Women's College, gained nearly the same lofty reputation among the Chinese. Vautrin exerted such protection over the women in her school that frustrated Japanese officers tried to rape Chinese boys instead. Like Rabe, she would eventually pay a high price for her decisions made in Nanking.

Ironically, incredibly, a Japanese socialist gave his approval to the program, and then quickly withdrew. In the absence of official approval, the Westerners marked off a small square within Nanking. This patch of ground was to be the area immune from Japanese control. It's all the more remarkable that the Westerners had no bargaining chips, and still won small victories. Sadly, it was impossible for the Japanese to distinguish soldiers from laborers; the Chinese had tossed away their uniforms. The Westerners could do nothing when ropes of random civilians were marched off to certain death, with no way to stop the slaughter.

The filmmakers even offer testimony from the lips of surviving Japanese (sometimes in vintage footage). Their accounts are surprisingly lean on regret or concern for their victims. Listening to the Japanese soldiers is unnerving and sometimes hard to bear.

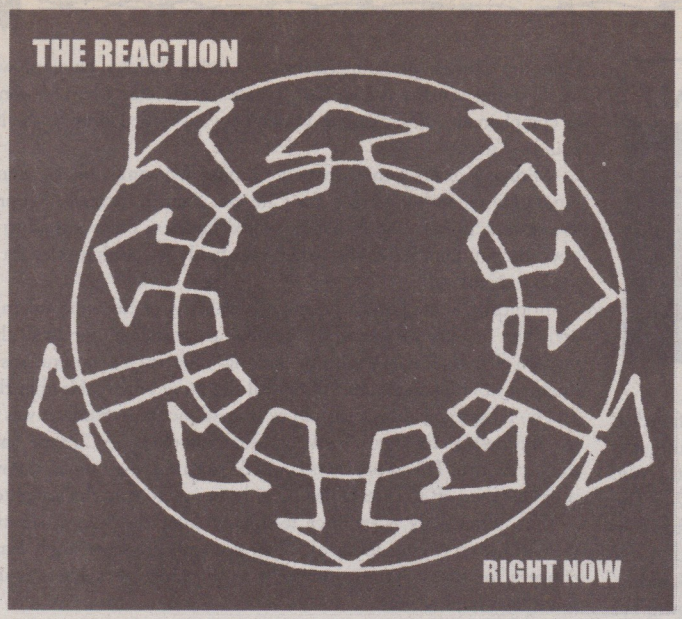
As the months passed, it was increasingly difficult to control the bored troops. Minnie Vautrin protected her girls so diligently that some Japanese soldiers were settling for young boys. It turns out that Rabe, with his Nazi connections, may have been the most useful in securing relative safety for other Nanking survivors.

It's easy for a film on Nanking to fall prey to incessant grimness, and probably even easier to understate the breadth of the tragedy. But the filmmakers were proficient at mixing re-told accounts with astonishing visuals of '30s Nanking with striking, first-hand accounts. A number of solid actors, including Stephen Dorff, Mariel Hemingway, and Woody Harrelson, give skin and bones to a story that gives a sense of dimension to the account. Rather than using statistics, **The Rape of Nanking** chooses seemingly random events to give a sense of daily terror. That said, there are some (mostly from the militant far right) in Japan, who refuse to believe that their soldiers could ever be anything but honorable and upstanding. As a result of this, even the more stringent narrative accounts are being scrutinized. It doesn't help that the story has been undercut by sensationalism, thanks to some dubious film versions.

Hong Kong's **The Man Behind the Sun** series has offered florid, dramatized drama dramatizing especially egregious atrocities from World War II (and thereabouts). Part four of the series provided its take on the Nanking events; gory and depressing, it offers a grab bag of horrors far exceeding the likes of most Category 3 exploitationers (like, say, **Chinese Torture Chamber Story**, which I actually like). Genuine corpses were used for some scenes. The most appalling period videos are edited in for good effect. Dripping with melodrama, it's the kind of film that makes you appreciate the value of a documentary approach over its dramatized alternative. As an event, Nanking is almost too tragic, too thick with sad details to make for satisfying entertainment—pretty much under any conditions. The story is mesmerizing no matter which way you approach it, but at least a documentary has a historicity to recommend it.

The most promising treatment of the subject is a story in itself. Historian Iris Chang authored her own account of the event called *The Nanking*, to considerable acclaim. A watershed modern account, the book found its way onto best-seller lists and nudged Chang into the position as unofficial spokesperson for the story. Reading the book is a sobering experience; not overly detailed, the book tries to balance non-fiction reportage with a frankly justifiable sense of indignation. It's difficult to write about mass rape and murder without at least a hint of outrage; it's almost unnatural not to. Most seemed to regard it as a credible version of the events, though several critics have complained about a few incorrect details—the sort of thing a more diligent fact-checker (or astute editor) might have avoided. (Let it be said that, even despite some inaccuracies, the fundamentals are unchallenged.)

As it happens, Chang's account has very recently gained additional attention with the upcoming release of a new documentary touching on her research. Directed by Simon West, **The Nanking** promises to set off even more controversy. Iris Chang is credited as co-author. Her role is complicated by the fact that she committed suicide only a few years after writing the book. Friends feel that her immersion in the subject may have triggered the suicide, combined with overwork and sleep deprivation. Like John Rabe and Minnie Vautrin, she suffered from being in contact with the Nanking tragedy, and is still honored by a Chinese community.



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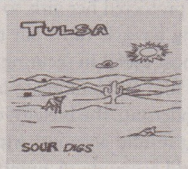

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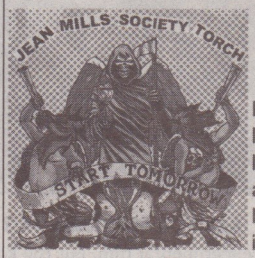

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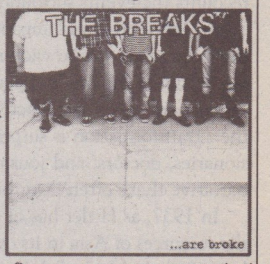

Five more songs of midwest desperation & no-coast bitterness. Fast and raw with just the right amount of fist-pumping catchiness, the Breaks pull no punches. These five songs were recorded at the same time as their "Get Saved" 7", but never made it to their intended releases. 100 on colored vinyl available through mailorder.

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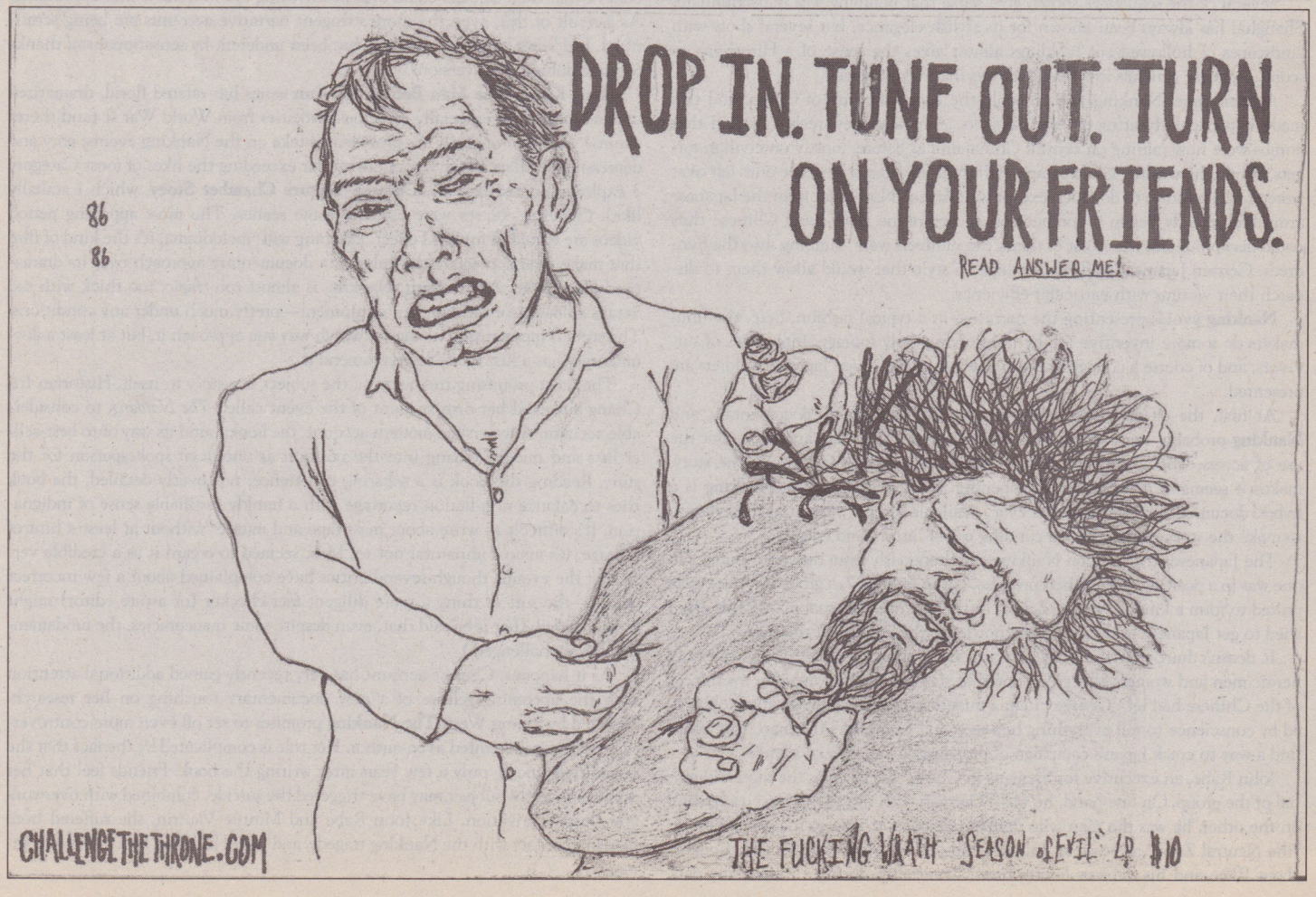

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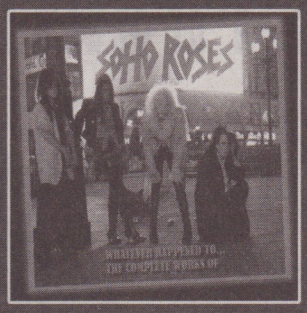

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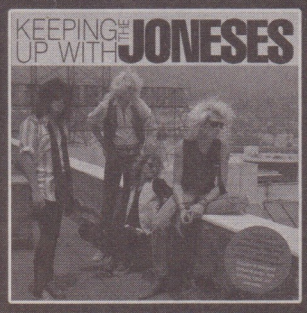

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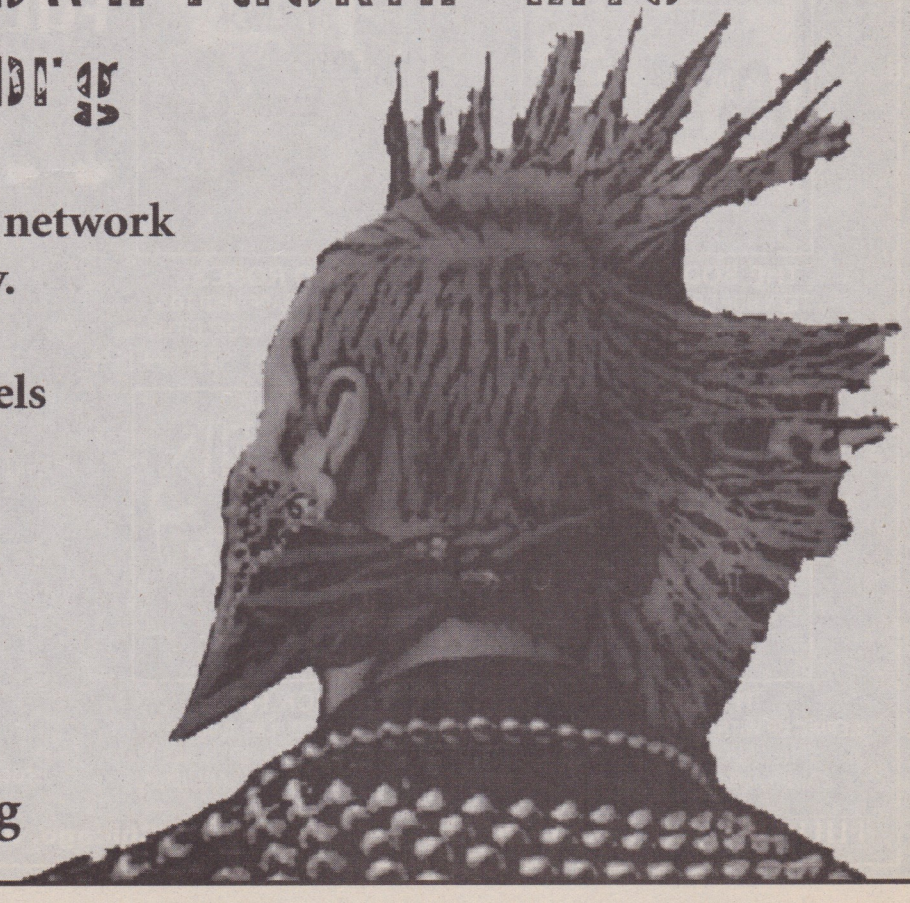

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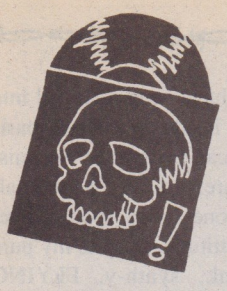

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ACURSED – "Tunneln I Ljusets Slut" LP

Driving hardcore punk from this (sorta) long-running Swedish unit. ACURSED has done a great job of mixing a bit of melody into their moody, vicious hardcore. A lot of the riffs on *Tunneln I Ljusets Slut* completely grabbed my attention and the playing and songs maintained my focus 'til the last note. The bottom heavy production keeps the thunder rolling and helps to compliment the burly, desperate presence that dominates the sound. The songs on *Tunneln I Ljusets Slut* have a gloomy, harsh nature and ACURSED executes this style as if they're professionals of misery. If you are a fan of modern Swedish hardcore such as DISFEAR, or *All Day Hell*-era WOLFPACK then I see no reason why you wouldn't cream in your jeans for *Tunneln I Ljusets Slut*. This record didn't come with a track list or insert—in fact, the whole package is minimal—but I like the weird, bleak artwork on the cover. (CI)
(Prank, PO Box 410892, San Francisco, CA 94141-0892, www.prankrecords.com)

AGENTS OF ABHORRENCE – "earth.water.sun." CD

I can't quite call this a full CD as it's under 20 minutes. I was worried by the cover, which is of a pink flower and the lowercase letters with periods in between the words—all bad signs in my experience. But I have been tricked! This is face-ripping grindcore! There is a sort of atmospheric, almost ACME-like element in addition to the otherwise ASSÜCK-ery, but this is great. I want to hear a full-length—get to it! (NM)
(625, www.625thrash.com)

ANOTHER KIND OF DEATH – "Sleepless Every Night" CD

ANOTHER KIND OF DEATH is typical Christian metal-core that takes itself way too seriously, even though they sound like all the bands that came before them. I couldn't pin down the fact that they were Christian for sure but they sound a lot like ZAO and the rest of the Solidstate Records bands. Heavy breakdowns, double bass, and obscure lyrics—the usual stuff to satisfy the typical sixteen-year-old modern mall punk. (PL)
(Underhill, PO Box 4220, 31080 Pamplona, SPAIN, www.underhillrcs.com)

THE APE-SHITS – "La Pollution Culturelle" CD

This is the first full-length from Austin, TX based band the APE-SHITS, who feature members of the DIRTY SWEETS. Their previous release is a split 7" with the GASH on Big Action Records. *La Pollution Culturelle* is over-the-top, snotty, and full-sounding '90s Estrus garage rock worship, complete with rockin' guitar solos, far-away fuzzed-out vocals, and some heavy snare work mixed under a super loud rhythm guitar, breaking bottles, and some "oh yeahs!" (AL)
(Super Secret, PO Box 1585 Austin, TX 78767, www.supersecretrecords.com)

THE ARRIVALS / THE BROKEDOWNS – split EP

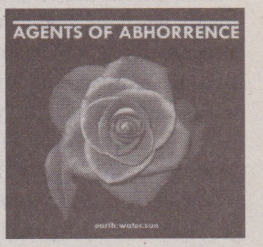
Ah fuck yeah, this record rules! Great split here. The three ARRIVALS songs are really good, each one instantly classic. I like them better than the tracks on the Recess LP, and I loved that record. I really like the direction the ARRIVALS are going. They have that sloppy, drunk Midwest sound very similar to DILLINGER FOUR or OFF WITH THEIR HEADS, but a bit more melodic. Not in a bad way either. The BROKEDOWNS side is good but the ARRIVALS side is a tough act to follow. Their first song is something you'd expect to find on a Fat Wreck Chords comp. Good but forgettable. The second song is where it's at, on this side. It's like they listed to *Vs. God* 200 times and then wrote a song. I suggest everyone do that at least once in their life. The last song sounds like a WHISKEY SUNDAY song. But yeah, great 7". (FS)
(1-2-3-4-Go!, c/o S. Stevenson, 1321 Glenfield Ave, Oakland, CA 94602, www.1234gorecords.com)

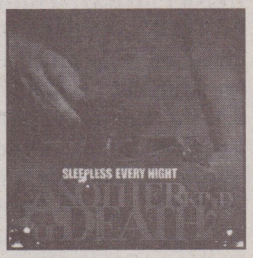
THE ARTERIES / GLOBAL PARASITES – split EP

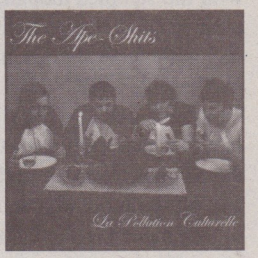
A split from two very different Welsh bands. The ARTERIES play layered, melodic punk rock with some BAD RELIGION-esque harmonies, while GLOBAL PARASITES offer up a shorter blast of political post D-beat rage. Good stuff. (PC)
(Complete Control Music, Unit 8, 24 Norbury Rd, Fairwater, Cardiff, CF5 3AU, WALES, www.complete-controlmusic.com)

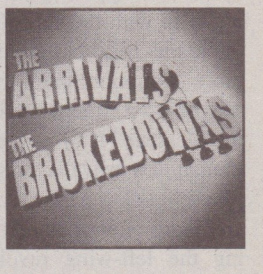
BAADER BRAINS – "The Complete Unfinished Works of the Young Tigers" LP

Kind of a corny band name. It's at least a little heavy-









handed anyway. A BAD BRAINS reference, yes, but it's also a play on a left-wing German terrorist group from the late-'60s known as the Baader-Meinhof gang, or the Red Army Faction. Apparently their brains were stored and mysteriously disappeared from some mysterious German government vault. The packaging is very elaborate, reminding me aesthetically at least of the NATION OF ULYSSES with a more anarcho bent maybe? Anyway, it's a similarly artsy/revolutionary aesthetic, with band pseudonyms, a fake political organization, and even an extremely elaborate fake political pamphlet. Everything has been put together as if they are an underground terrorist organization at war with the government, and it kind of reminds me of '70s post-apocalyptic science fiction movies, the iconic '60s revolutionary aesthetic, and also Reagan-era political hardcore records. The music? Well, this *is* a Mike Kirsch band, and if you know what that means and are into it, you probably already own this. Also features Jose Palafox who I think was in SWING KIDS and STRUGGLE, and Mike Kirsch of course was in TORCHES TO ROME, BREAD AND CIRCUITS, JOHN HENRY WEST, PLEASE INFORM THE CAPTAIN, NAVIO FORGE, and a million other politically-charged hardcore bands. Musically this record definitely calls to mind that era of music, featuring, as it does, two of the key musicians who defined '90s hardcore. I liked it, but found the samples that run between all of the songs kind of tiresome in a way that detracted from the music. They kind of play with the samples though, more than just using a piece of dialogue before the song starts; it seems more in the tradition of sound collage, maybe like NEGATIVLAND or something. One thing that I found slightly annoying is the fact that there are a lot of references made to the Vietnam War, and other '60s/'70s political and sub-cultural moments of resistance. Which in turn made me think about how much fucked up stuff is happening now, but because it doesn't fit in with the chic '60s revolutionary aesthetic this band has adopted, the politics seem more symbolic than meaningful somehow. Maybe it's a comment on that? The Meaning is the Message? It's like how having a photo of a French new-wave actress from a '60s Goddard movie reading Mao is much less threatening and more of an aesthetic choice than referencing the left-wing revolutions happening in South and Central America or the endless Orwellian War on Terror. Not that BAADER BRAINS have pictures of foxy French Actresses in their artwork, I guess I was just using that as a metaphor. Instead they have photos of what I am assuming are female Viet Cong soldiers with a dead soldier sprawled in front of them. (LG)
(Clean Plate, PO Box 946, N. Amherst, MA 01059)

BAD CHOPPER – CD

Twelve tracks of sleazy yet catchy rock 'n' roll—all done with a heavy hint of TURBONEGRO and the DEAD BOYS. Played loud with attitude and a touch of that FU MANCHU vibe mixed in for good measure. (SD)
(Acme, PO Box 441, Dracut, MA 01826, www.acmerecords.net)

BASTARD SONS OF APOCALYPSE – "Strangled by the System" LP

My favorite South Texas chubby *cholas* are back with a new self-released 12". Actually, Mosca and Leal are the chubbies and the others are total *flacas*. OK, enough of that bullshit, BSA brings us another blast of rapid fire D-beat craziness. Scandi-influenced hardcore done with enough power and punch to separate itself from the many bands that produce this sound and fail at it. This is a total fist-pumper of a record. (MS)
(Todo Destruido, tododestruido@gmail.com)

THE BETTER BEATLES – "Mercy Beat" LP

The idea that Omaha's BETTER BEATLES had in 1980 was to deconstruct and redo BEATLES songs by taking an original BEATLES song and using similar chord progressions and the same lyrics to the original holier-than-thou jams and to put them back together in a way that completely mangles the idea in such a way that you have no clue you're listening to a BEATLES song. So, here's a synth-y art-punk DIY band from 1980 shredding BEATLES songs, which sounds, at the very least, interesting, right? Isn't this LP based on one of the main foundations of punk—to destroy pop culture? To tear apart things which have been shoved down our throats as holy and unfuckwithable? Here are some more interesting tidbits: the BETTER BEATLES recorded these songs around 1981, and the liner notes (featuring an interview done by Jay Hinman) state that John Peel played their one release (the *Penny Lane/I'm Down* 45) on his show quite a bit, and when his was stolen, he requested another from drummer Jay Rosen. *Mercy Beat* takes that same 45 and tacks on the rest of the songs from the session to equal ten full tracks that have gone under the knife. This is a love-it-or-hate-it type record. It's grating, it's challenging, and these songs aren't (necessarily) meant for BEATLES fans. In fact, it's hard to remember you're listening to songs written by the most popular band of all time. There is no hint of the songs that have been pounded into all of the population's heads on a repeat basis since as long as they can remember. So, mission accomplished? Sure, you've got minimalist songs with monotone lyrics spoken over 'em and a shit ton of attitude. Despite my pure love for an art-punk, synth-y, FLYING LIZARDS-ish sound, this LP doesn't have all the elements to tie it together despite the generally awesome idea. Why doesn't it work? It should. I appreciate the sentiment. But in the end it sounds like a boring college art project gone painfully, horribly bad. This piece of history is bunk as a listenable product. (AL)
(Hook or Crook, 360 Grand Ave #148, Oakland, CA 94610-4840, www.hookorcrook.com)

THE BILLYBONES – "We're Selfish" EP

Wow. These guys borrow from a number of different areas, most circa 1978. Initially, I'm taken to Australia and the early garage rockers. Then you can hear some DEAD BOYS influence. They even steal a little lead guitar from the BUZZCOCKS. On side two they cover ROXY MUSIC and throw in some saxophone, which always makes me think of X-RAY SPEX. It's upbeat, it's catchy, and it's got a real full sound without sounding at all over-produced. This is definitely top ten material. (KK)
(Dr. Strange, PO Box 1058, Alta Loma, CA 91701, www.drstrange.com)

BOOM BOOM KID – "Wasabi" CD

BOOM BOOM KID is the most recent (but by no means new) vehicle for the ex-FUN PEOPLE frontman, and from what I understand, BOOM BOOM KID is, if anything, a live band. As far as this record (which is my first real exposure to BOOM BOOM KID) is concerned, I may be missing something, but maybe not. Certain songs on this give me the same feeling I got from CHISEL's *4 AM All Day* LP. To some, that may be a bad thing, but I loved that record when it came out and still probably would if I had it. Though this is quite a bit "punker" than said album, it's got that same jangle-y guitar, pumping out simple and sweet pop ditties. Also present are elements of '50s pop and a Latin flare, which makes sense since the band is based out of Argentina. The impassioned vocals really drive this album. It's real "singing" and he hits the notes with a pin-point precision rarely seen in the punk world. There is a bit of filler on this (short) disc and at least one and possibly two (?) Ricardo Valenzuela (a.k.a. Richie Valens) covers; all in all this would be a really catchy and cool two- or three-song single 'cause the good tracks are *really good tracks* and the more I listen to them, the more I *want* to listen to

them again. (JU)
(Ugly, no address)

BORN BAD – "Moron Music" EP

Fuck yes! Fashionable Idiots Record Company is up to their necks in the dangerous punk railing! The newest member of this notorious clan of ne'er-do-wells is BORN BAD with their *Moron Music* EP. This highly disturbing collection of punk rants is guaranteed to make your family hide in fear! Every song dispenses with formalities and goes for the throat immediately! The guitar and drum barrage are overwhelming! You are hammered into the ground like a tent stake! Start with "Society Bullshit," move to "Follower," then "Kill the Punks" feels the darkness spreading into your life! BORN BAD finishes the job with "Excessive Force," "No Tomorrow," and "Washed Up"! Fucking straight-up thrash violence! Fucking great! (BR)
(Fashionable Idiots, PO Box 580131, Minneapolis, MN 55458, www.fashionableidiots.com)

BROKEN BOTTLES – "Hospital" CD

A band that has been going at all for way too long…I think this is their third long-player release. BROKEN BOTTLES embodies the Southern California eyeliner, striped shirt, and drug-tinged punk rock ethos better than most. Harking back to the glory days of Posh Boy records—funny boots, cop bust-ups, and too many overdose victims. Reminders of SHATTERED FAITH, SOCIAL DISTORTION, and TSOL come flooding in. A great and overdue release chock full of anthems, brooding hooks, and songwriting stinking of a rich punk rock history. (SD)
(TKO, 8941 Atlanta Ave, Suite 505, Huntington Beach, CA 92646, www.tkorecords.com)

BILLY CHILDISH & THE MUSICIANS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE – "It Should Be Me/Loray Head"

Another fine release from BILLY CHILDISH and his latest musical incarnation. Two very catchy songs that immediately call to mind the KINKS. I'd even say by naming his band the MUSICIANS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE, Childish is evoking the spirit of *Arthur*-era Ray Davies and his obsession with all things English. These are pop-garage unrequited love songs. Sweet, yet slightly painful, as the A-side isn't afraid to point out. I also like the addition of a female, Nurse Julie, to a CHILDISH band and her complimentary back-up vocals. CHILDISH sounds great harmonizing with a woman. (CK)
(Slovenly, PO Box 204, Reno, NV 89504, www.solvenly.com)

LE CLUB DES CHATS – "Yes Madame!" EP

I was totally excited to be assigned an EP from S-S records because so far they have a pretty good track record, even though the cover looked like one of those funny-cute bands that I really never dig. The first couple tracks actually brought me back to the sparse goofiness of the MOLDY PEACHES, which I was fully not thrilled about. Three songs in I got kind of used to it, and by the end of the EP I was bobbing along and actually smiling a bit. They are definitely not serious—every song contains at least one high-pitched utterance of "meow," and it all stumbles along with random guitar scratches and meager drum ramblings. They've got a bit of a post-punk vibe, but more like the bands that played toys kind of unsuccessfully. My favorite song, "Minie," completely drops the guitar, replacing it with duck quacks and whistles, with a girl squealing all the way through. They are a little bit too weird and goofy for the sake of being weird and goofy, but on the tracks where they reign it in a little bit it's totally rickety, off-kilter goodness. (MM)
(S-S, 1114 21st St, Sacramento, CA 95811, www.s-srecords.com)

COKE BUST – "Fuck Bar Culture" EP

Washington DC's COKE BUST returns with a proper release (if you don't really count the *Demo* 7" released in 2006). Similarities to INFEST, WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?, and other fast/hardcore bands are present. I wasn't sure at first if they were straight edge or not, but I guess they are. That's not necessarily a bad thing (I mean come on—MINOR THREAT, bitches)—I just wish more bands of that genre sound as good as this. Intelligent lyrics and a beat that all the kids can dance to. The track "Because Of the Label" is bound to be a classic as well. Get it? Got it? Good! (JH)
(Third Party, 1349 N Bell Ave, Chicago, IL 60622, www.thirdparty.com)

COMPLETE WASTE – "Sustain" EP

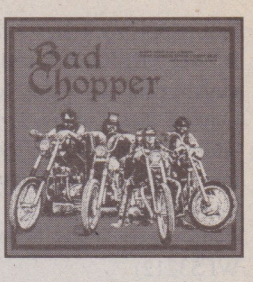
Great guitar sound on the opening track. We are presented with six fast hardcore tunes with an '82 sound. Luckily, the songs are short and sweet. The songs on side one are strong while I feel side B lacks punch. Overall, cool first release and loads of potential here. (MS)
(Give Praise, PO Box 494, Barnstable, MA 02630-0494, www.givepraiserecords.com)

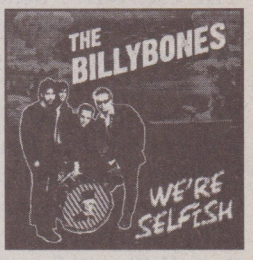
CONVERSIONS – "Prisoner's Intentions" LP

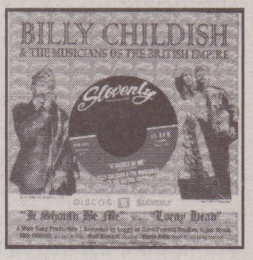
Everyone I know complains about how derivative things seem to be these days. They say bands are just aping what came before, and that even if it seems like someone steps out of their genre, it's not far—no one redefining or striking out into uncharted territory. If you've been feeling this way about the state of punk and hardcore as of late, here is the band to make you shit your pants. CONVERSIONS offer up some inventive hardcore punk that has some very post-punk moments (read: angular, weird, and rhythmically dynamic) but they keep up the pace and intensity throughout. The vocals could be a little more varied to complement what is going on musically, but that's my only gripe. It's a really dramatic record with pretty much all that I hope to hear—smart, rage-filled lyrics, a sound all their own, and tight fucking jams. Goddamn. (AA)
(Level Plane, PO Box 7926, Charlottesville, VA 22906, www.level-plane.com)

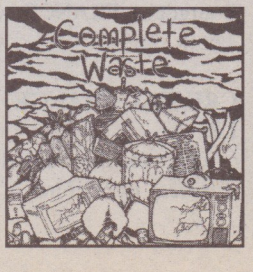
CRAPPY DRACULA – "What's Going To Happen To Us?" EP

This is a weird little 7" here. Four songs of bare-bones,









mid-tempo rock and roll, kind of similar to a DEAD MILKMEN style. You can tell these guys are having a crap-load of fun writing and playing these songs. Lyrics are heavy on the oddball humor. I don't know what to make of this record, but I do know these guys must do a lot of drugs. (FS)
(Self-released, 707 E. Wright St. Milwaukee, WI 53212)

THE CROWD – "Letterbomb" CD

The CROWD was once one of the coolest bands on Earth—check out their tracks on the *Beach Blvd* comp, they're right up there with the first RED CROSS record. This record comes from 1996, a decade and a half later, and though it's not really the same band (well, it is the same band, but you know what I mean) it's still good nonetheless. Sounding more like their HB/Long Beach contemporaries US BOMBS and SMOGTOWN (and just a hint of COCK SPARRER for good measure) than their old trademark mod-beach-punk sound, this is still a very good listen and a lot better (from what I remember) than *Big Fish Stories*, their album from 1989. I'd recommend this but only after you've (if you haven't already) checked out the *Beach Blvd* comp and *A World Apart* LP. The CD also includes the *Dig Yourself* EP from '95, which is really good and a little more like their older stuff. Fair fucks to 'em, they stuck at it and didn't turn into shit like BLACK FLAG and RED CROSS. Sorry, REDD KROSS. (AD)
(TKO, 8941 Atlanta Ave, Suite 505, Huntington Beach, CA 92646, www.tkorecords.com)

CROWPATH / SUBMERGE – split EP

I've always heard of CROWPATH but never listened to them 'til now and I'm impressed. One long slow track here. Brings to mind CEPHALIC CARNAGE, NILE, and even later NEUROSIS at points. An apocalyptic suffocation dirge, very technical in a way. These Swedes know how to play, and they play very well. This made me want to check out their other material. SUBMERGE plays fast-as-fuck hardcore, delivered straightforward-like. They didn't really get me all excited as much as the CROWPATH side, but it's not total shit. I've just heard it before. You might like it though, check it out for yourself. (JH)
(Shogun, 2 Rue De La Colinette, 51110 Bourgogne, FRANCE, www.shogunrecordings.com)

CRUCIAL CHANGE – "Made in America" LP

OK, so the record is called *Made in America*, right? First of all, it's on a *German* label. Secondly, the photo on the back cover shows these dudes wearing the following: Fred Perry shirt, Lonsdale London hoodie, COCKNEY REJECTS T-shirt, Dr. Martens boots. And then they sing with no irony whatsoever, "American-made, red white and blue / Fighting for the underdog, straight through and through." Do I really have to listen to this? (PC)
(Dim, U. Grossman, Postfach 11, D-96237 Ebersdorf, GERMANY, www.dimrecords.de)

THE CUMMIES / THE RICH WHITE MALES – split CD

Here we've got a split between "International Losers" (their words, not mine—though I'm not really persuaded to disagree) the RICH WHITE MALES from the US and the CUMMIES from Italy. First up is the 'MALES, who deliver six tracks of suitably hi-energy three-chord RAMONES worship with a snotty attitude that would make Ben Weasel proud. "Drop the Bomb" is actually pretty darn catchy, and for some reason I just can't stop chuckling at the fact that their guitarist is named "Rich White." Damn, I must've actually lost some brain cells while I was listening to this. Fortunately, the CUMMIES aren't really challenging my diminished intellect—a half-dozen more RAMONES-influenced tunes (well, one of 'em's a POINTED STICKS cover). Not bad, though they lose some points for having either a drum machine or the world's most boring drummer... (CS)
(Punk N Junk, www.punknjunkrecords.com)

DEAD BY DAWN – "The Coming Plague" LP

Second LP by this metallic hardcore band from Portland, and first since adding Flyin' Grant Kasten (ANIMAL FARM, LIVING UNDER LIES, TALK IS POISON) on guitar, and the mid-tempo churning of the first two above mentioned bands is felt under the myriad of metal influences—from black metal to stoner rock—that the band was cornered in before. Wicked vocals drip lyrics following the LP's theme of humanity's decay, and the artful and somber instrumentals (often in lower-fi recording than the rest of the record, as per the HEROIN or the GASP LPs) dropped between every few tracks give the LP an even more bleak tone. Reminiscent of EL DOPA's punk/metal fusion without the overly produced recording and technical finesse of a metal band, but strengthened by a bare-knuckled punk approach of raw vocals and accomplished, powerfully banged-out musicianship, that boils the music right below hardcore tempo while still simmering with intensity. (KS)
(Defector, PO Box 3921, Portland, OR 97208, www.thedefector.com)

DEAD CITY ROCKERS / WHITE BARONS – split EP

Sweden's DEAD CITY ROCKERS offer a straightforward, mid-tempo track that's part punk 'n' roll and part early-1980s Midwest hardcore, delivered with slightly gravelly vocals. It was solid, if not totally eye-opening. San Francisco's WHITE BARONS gives us one that is a little more up-tempo and also a little less punk and a little more rock 'n' roll, with a hint of psychobilly. (KK)
(Champagne and Cocaine, no address)

DEATHORTION – "War and Starvation" EP

This shit really reminds me of DISRUPT. During every song I wanna keep shouting "Smash Divisions!" Ten-tracks of D-beat crust sporting a screaming guy paired with a growling guy. Seriously, DISRUPT Jr. That's a good thing...I guess. (JU)
(D-Takt & Råpunk, PO Box 12-114, 79 Stockholm, SWEDEN, skitliv666@gmail.com)

DEFEATIST – "Thanatonic State" EP

KALIBAS is one of my all-time favorite grindcore bands and at least one member is in DEFEATIST. This is grindcore without being straightforward grind and I can't exactly place why. It's raw and fast but the guitar sticks to the basics. Parts (the rhythm?) remind of SULACO if they had a completely different tone. The speed changes a good amount but the guitar otherwise stays away from techie playing. The vocals are high-pitched and somewhat monotone. DEFEATIST also contains former members of ANODYNE and they remind me of early speedy grind/HC bands like EXTREME NOISE TERROR or current bands like SAYYADINA. But it's not all go; they slow down and change up the pace a bit. Great shit. (MH)
(Level Plane, PO Box 7926, Charlottesville, VA 22906, www.level-plane.com)

DEFEATIST / KURSK – split EP

New York's DEFEATIST blasts out screeched vocals over four tracks of NAPALM DEATH-ish guttural guitar grindcore over throttling drums that drive the whole affair. Brutal! Winnipeg's KURSK's two tracks are also completely driven by a high paced drum attack, but is almost like a collision between grind and "dude, no way" indie math-rock, capped with tormented dwarf vocals spewing CARCASS-style medical residency 'n' bong

hits influenced lyrics. Savage! (KS)
(Level Plane, PO Box 7926, Charlottesville, VA 22906, www.level-plane.com)

DEFIANCE, OHIO – "The Fear, The Fear, The Fear" LP

I had no idea until about three weeks ago, but apparently DEFIANCE, OHIO is fucking huge now. I went to one of their shows 'cause VENA CAVA was playing and the place was packed. When DEFIANCE, OHIO played everyone flipped out. I mean *flipped out*. There was like 250 kids and every single person sung along to every song like it was their last moment on earth. It blew me away. When they didn't play an encore, the crowd sung an entire song while they were breaking down their instruments. What about these guys would possess people to act so crazy? I don't get it. They play that sort of Bloomington/Plan-It-X style of music. Songs you can imagine being sung around a campfire, but with a full band behind them—about living a simple life, not buying into "the system," heartbreak, that kind of stuff. This is the kind of music that doesn't really sound punk at all, in even the super loose terms that we use today. But the kids making the music are punk rock kids and the songs defiantly carry the spirit of the genre. DEFIANCE, OHIO sounds really good, they're just a little too heavy on the dramatics for me. But if you're into the Bloomington style, then you'll love the shit out of this album. (FS)
(No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604-4636, www.noidearecords.com)

DEMON'S CLAWS – 12"

Have I gotten into my favorite sound/emotion/way of life (sleaze) much with this batch of reviews yet? Because DEMON'S CLAWS definitely deserve the sleaze-bag badge. Perhaps it's due to their Montreal origins (it's sleazy there, right?), or perhaps it's an innate quality only found in the cream-of-the-crop of today's throwback noisy garage punk bands. Originally released on vinyl by P.Trash and on CD by Dead Canary Records in 2004. Radio 81 Records thought that this self-titled 12" was deserving of a vinyl repress so they slapped on new (impressive) cover art and sent it on its way. These songs haven't gotten old or tired over the past few years—instead, the echoed, desperate, lo-fi booms of shadowy blues and '60s garage punk snot are still a good old sleazy time. It swaggers and sways as much as ever. (AL)
(Radio 81, c/o Simon Perusse, 2 - 1675 Boul. St-Joseph Est, Montreal, QC, H2J 1N1 CANADA, www.radio81records.com)

THE DICTATORS – "Every Day Is Saturday" CD

An oddball collection of DICTACTORS' tracks from demo sessions, a soundtrack, a tribute record, and a few funny radio spots. The majority of the recordings are from the '70s, but there are some more recent tracks. They sound rough, but to hear them cover "America the Beautiful" is weirdly appealing. THE DICTATORS were a one-of-a-kind band and this collection further emphasizes it. THE DICTATORS at the Whiskey in LA for only $1.00, but $3.00 in Eugene? Yeah, those were the days. (CK)
(Norton, Box 646 Cooper Stn, New York, NY 10276, www.nortonrecords.com)

DISGRUNTLED – "Hopeless World" LP

Gotta be honest, this doesn't excite me much. Very straightforward, plain, early-to-mid-'80s USHC style—like maybe a less intense POISON IDEA, or even GBH with sort of raspy vocals. Overall, DISGRUNTLED seems kind of average-sounding with kind of boring lyrics. Not my thing. (NM)
(Dead End, PO Box 391 N. Lombard, Portland, OR, 97203)

DISLICKERS / GIFTGAS ATTACK – split EP

Wow, this is a total barebones D-Beat assault—doubt that will surprise anyone! Both of these groups are from Sweden. GIFTGAS ATTACK is totally blown-out and raw, and actually a bit hard to listen to, whereas DISLICKERS is raw in a good way! You know what you're getting here, and in my book this label can do no wrong! (NM)
(D-Takt & Råpunk, PO Box 12-114, 79 Stockholm, SWEDEN, skitliv666@gmail.com)

DOME LA MUERTE AND THE DIGGERS – CD

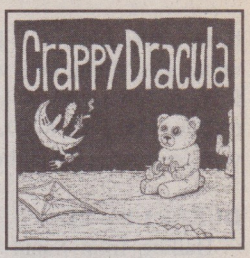
What's with these press releases? I need to read about what a damn champ the guitarist is? How awesome it is that Jello Biafra produced the one dude's cousin's baby-mama's first single? When did people start thinking that telling beats showing? It's like the guy who walks into a bar and screams, "Who the fuck wants some?" and is swiftly killed. I also find it amusing that the dudes who pride themselves on spending thousands of bucks extra to record analog always have the most overproduced, stale, '90s sound. Other than that, this is OK, I guess, if "OK" means instantly forgettable. (JP)
(Go Down, www.godownrecords.com)

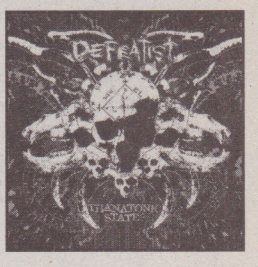
DOWN IN THE DUMPS – "Dumps Luck" CD

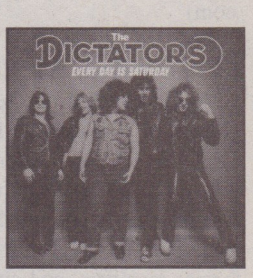
Melodic punk with gruff vocals (see LEATHERFACE, early AMERICAN STEEL). These dudes are flying the TILTWHEEL banner pretty high, but when they're at their best ("Ex-Brothers & Ex-Lovers") there's some levity in the guitar noodling that wouldn't be out of place on that last POTBOILER 7". Not as charming or melodic as TILTWHEEL, but certainly not bad. It's refreshing to hear this style of punk played without any southern rock or bar rock influence. If you can't get enough TILTWHEEL or you're into most of the stuff on ADD Records, then check this out. (P$)
(Kiss of Death, PO Box 75550, Tampa, FL 33675, www.kissofdeathrecords.com)

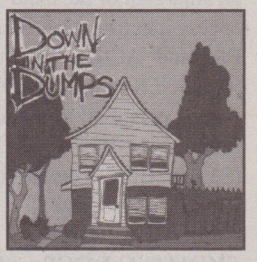
DOWN IN THE DUMPS / TILTWHEEL – split EP

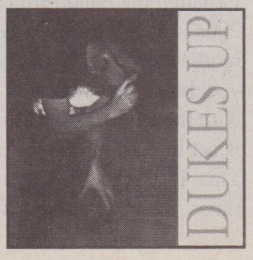
"Fuck You Yams" by TILTWHEEL has a great sound, with lush guitars, doubled vocals, and a really nice breakdown at the end—definitely the standout track on this EP. DOWN IN THE DUMPS (like TILTWHEEL) plays mid-tempo melodic punk with gruff dude vocals. Their side of the split is *pretty* good, but sounds like something that is











better appreciated in a live basement setting, rather than sitting here with headphones on in front of a computer, ya know? (PC)
(ADD, PO Box 8240, Tampa, FL 33674, www.myspace.com/addrecords)

DUKES UP – CD

Hailing from Santa Cruz, CA, this band plays a modern hardcore style that sounds like CHAMPION or GO IT ALONE. Their songs are fast, melodic, and heavy with lyrics that encourage you to stay positive and ignore the pressure to conform to certain ideals. This band almost made me a believer until a clip from *Say Anything* came on and lost me—sorry, but it's just a little too emo for me to handle. (PL)
(Silly Girl, www.myspace.com/sillygirl records)

ENDGAME – "Distracted" CD

Five tracks of melodic hardcore of the emo variety. LIFETIME, RITES OF SPRING (though the promo sheet with this release name-dropped RITES OF SPRING—obviously the earlier speed-core variety!?), SHADES APART, that sort of stuff. They don't quite have the intensity, nor the killer tunes of the aforementioned hardcore heroes, but they give it a decent go. (RK)
(Get Outta Town, PO Box 4094, Winter Park, FL 32793-4094, www.getouttatownrecords .com)

F – "Four From '84" EP

Another beautifully realized delve into forgotten US punk history from Burrito Records. This time it's South Florida's F who has been uncovered. Four songs from a 1984 nine-song tape release are compiled on this 7", along with some band history, clippings, liner notes from former members, and an exhaustive interview with founder Flash. The songs themselves are an amalgam of the band's glam and punk influences, incorporating SLADE, ALICE COOPER, and AC/DC as well as the PISTOLS, STOOGES, and RAMONES. Great stuff, just oozing personality, and an amazing package all round. (AM)
($3 ppd: Burrito c/o Sound Idea, PO Box 3204, Brandon, FL 33509)

FIGHTING DOGS – "Dead Weight" EP

This final three-track, limited EP from this Philadelphia band refines where their previous 2004 LP left off. Delivering the speed with more precision and adding scathing female vocals as the dominant vocals that trade off with the LP's harsh male vocals, but this outing is set in an all around grimier and darker tone. This is partly from the recording, which, at times, seems at odds in trying to contain the fury. Where the LP could be described as "metal influenced hardcore," the metallic influences here are more incorporated into the totality of the guitar-riff blasting and squeal out as intricate bridges and curt solos. Similar to THE AWAKENING, MEMENTO MORI, or other bands that connect the various points between metal, the FROM ASHES RISE/TRAGEDY crust sound, and Japanese hardcore. A great exclamation point ending to a fine band that's worth getting into. (KS)
(Solar Funeral, c/o Dennis Berendts, PO Box 2192, Heath, OH 43056-0192, www.solar-funeral.org)

FUCK THIS / STATE – split EP

Reformed early-'80s legends return with another new recording. This is solid shit sounding a lot like their old stuff—kinda ARTICLES OF FAITH meets MDC, fast and immediate with great angry, politicized lyrics. What I don't understand is why such a great band would do a split with a band like FUCK THIS. Their side is so sub-par in comparison—one-dimensional male/female hardcore, like some of the shittier Squat or Rot bands from NYC in the late-'80s. I think that STATE is such a classic band, that a split like this kinda devalues their legacy in my eyes, but keep yer eyes out 'cos the STATE side is great. (TB)
(Punks Before Profit, PO Box 1148, Grand Rapids, MI 49501, www.punksbeforprofits.com)

FUTURE VIRGINS / ONION FLAVORED RINGS – split EP

The ONION FLAVORED RINGS side of this split caught me by surprise. In the past I've checked out and usually enjoyed what these dudes were peddling but never got too into it. The music's a little faster this time around—it's catchy as hell, and the hooks are absolutely killer. Think jangly pop punk somewhat similar to THIS BIKE IS A PIPE BOMB, but instead of the folk element there's a pop thing happening. On the flip, FUTURE VIRGINS is comprised of former members of SEXY and the JACK PALANCE BAND. Like the first SEXY record, it sounds like these dudes are going for broke. The songs are great. Not as mind blowing as some of the stuff on their first 7", but still pretty fuckin' formidable. Highly recommended. (P$)
(1-2-3-4 Go!, c/o S. Stevenson, 1321 Glenfield Ave, Oakland, CA 94602, www.1234gorecords .com)

GAYE BLADES – "Don't Get Married/ Bobby Is a Lover"

One guy from the LIDS and one guy from BLACK LIPS join together for some faux-'50s crooning. It sure seemed like a great idea the other night when they were drunk and hanging out with KING KHAN and BBQ. Yet, usually when that hangover finally goes away you are just stuck with some embarrassing recollections. These guys had to go and put it on vinyl. (CK)
(Rob's House, www.robshouserecords.com)

GIT SOME / IN THE RED – split EP

I think this record came out some time last year, dunno why we're just getting it now. The cover is a Christy Road drawing of what appears to be a couple of hipster suicide bombers. If only all the hipsters *would* blow themselves up…anyway, to the record: IN THE RED is ex-GUNMOLL, who I'm not too familiar with. They play kind of modern No Idea style punk. The singer sounds so much like Blake Schwarzenbach it's unreal. If JAWBREAKER could get back together, but with this guy singing, no one would know the difference. GIT SOME threw me for a complete loop: the last thing I was expecting from this record was some total stoner/HAWKWIND dirge rock. I have to say it was a most welcome surprise. (AM)
(1-2-3-4 Go! c/o S. Stevenson, 1321 Glenfield Ave, Oakland, CA 94602, www.1234gorecords .com)

GOD EQUALS GENOCIDE – "This World Is Wearin' Me Down" EP

This 7" has six songs with indecipherable lyrics that are super political in a *Green Anarchy* kind of way and beg to be snarled along to. The songs are all thrashy and fast, three-chord Oi! style punk, and I bet it results in some of the funnest slam-dancing ever and includes lots of fist pumping. They also strike me as the type of band that plays acoustic and the whole audience sits on the floor and sings along. Most of the songs seem to be sung by a girl, except for the one about being in the army, which contextually works. It's pretty good, but for me it falls into the, "I-don't-have-anything-by-them-but-I-never-miss-a-show" category. (MM)
(Razorcake, PO Box 42129, Los Angeles, CA 90042, www.razorcake.com)

HAUNTED GEORGE / HEX DISPENSERS – split EP

Two of the past couple years' top-notch acts swap songbooks and pay tribute to each other on this exercise in inventive marketing from Hook or Crook. "Forest Ray Colson" is given the desert-fuzz treatment care of old GEORGE, which fares better than expected. Then "Pile o' Meat" is transformed into a catchy punker by the HEX DISPENSERS. They could do "We

Are The World" and I'd still probably wanna drink and dance to it. A nice intro to both bands, if'n yer so inclined. (MC)
(Hook or Crook, 360 Grand Ave. #148, Oakland, CA 94610, www.hookorcrook.com)

THE HEARTATTACKS – "Stay/Go" EP

Plastic Idol has really cornered the market on "Yippee!!!" punk. Happy, high-pitched E-to-A pop music in the vein of the MINDS and the MARKED MEN, made especially charming by the bass player seemingly not knowing what the fuck is happening but is so melodic. And the singer has that juvenile delinquent voice down, but without being "snotty" (you 8,687,993 singers that can't seem to understand this subtlety take note). All three songs are bitchin' and I'm pissed I didn't get a reviewer copy. (JP)
(Plastic Idol, www.plasticidolrecords.com, mario@plasticidolrecords.com)

HIGH TENSION / WARVICTIMS – split EP

It seems like Sweden's WARVICTIMS has a new record out every month but I'm sure that's an epic exaggeration. On this platter, they offer up three more tracks of fairly standard Scandi-beat hardcore with low growling vox. There is not much else to say about WARVICTIMS—it's competent, aggressive, and classic, but are they just phoning it in? Kinda feels like it. HIGH TENSION on the other hand does have something to add. They play a very simplistic variation of D-beat hardcore but the riffs are creative and are more than three chords repeated over and over. They don't sound clone-ish at all and I'm left curious as to what the next record will be like. (JU)
(Vinyl Eaters, htension@hotmail.com)

HORROR OF '59 – "The Golden Age of Sin" CD

My frame of reference for a band like this is pretty much nil…the music played on this disc is fairly blasé sub-heavy metal with vague punk overtones. The guitar wails out some useless wankery and overall these songs have no dynamics—nothing remarkable at all. The vocalist sometimes holds out notes but in that annoying punk-dude-crooner fashion that reminds me of PENNYWISE or something. The drums tap along in a very basic pattern/speed throughout the whole shebang. Ugh, it's just boring, boring, and boring. They have a horror fixation. I guess that's the aspect of the band that sticks out the most. I can imagine this on the soundtrack of an '80s punxploitation movie. Ya know, one of those movies that equate punk and metal as being the same thing. If you think it would be awesome to hang out with the characters in the *Class of 1984* every day for the rest of your life, then you might like HORROR OF '59. (CI)
(My Mind's Eye, 13727 Madison Ave, Lakewood, OH 44107, www.mymindseyerecords.com)

LOS IDIOTAS – "The Blob" EP

LOS IDOTAS applies the proper abandon necessary to transcend the limitations of garage punk and write good songs too. What's more to say? These boys are contenders. (DD)
(Slovenly, PO Box 204, Reno, NV 89504, www.solvenly.com)

INSOMNIO – "No Escape" LP

INSOMNIO, from Spain, offers an assured set of tunes with a fun, rock-ish edge. The songs range from medium to fast tempo, with a muscular guitar backdrop and biting lead breaks. Comparisons with the DEAD BOYS are valid, but INSOMNIO's sound is more immediate and bass-rich. Frankly, after listening to half an album, the vocals could use more variety. "She Says No" and "Dynamite" come closest of the ten tracks to capturing an individual sound. This has some appealing elements, and is definitely worth a listen. (SS)
(Trabuc, www.nodo50.org/trabucrecords)

INSTÄNGD – "Mitt Svar På Ingenting" EP

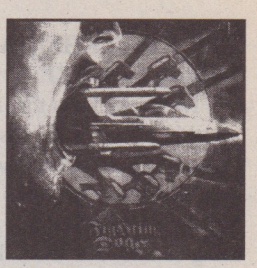
Debut EP from this new Swedish band (with, judging by the photos, some ex-members of blah blah and the blahs)—six tracks of primitive, aggressive, blown-out punk rock bordering on hardcore. *Mitt Svar På Ingenting* is deceptively simple on first listen, but with each successive spin of this platter I understand a little more that INSTÄNGD have got something good here. Though these folks clearly have their own take on things, this reminds me of some of those Danish bands that were all the rage in the early '00s; perhaps like something HUL would've put out if they hadn't broken up. The closing track is the strongest—a mostly mid-tempo stomper with a totally weird and awesome effects-driven guitar lead. Definite mix-tape material (do people even make those any more?). Can't wait to hear their next one. (CS)
(Sorry State, c/o Daniel Lupton, 1102 N. Greensboro Street, Carrboro, NC 27510, deepfrybonanza.com/sorrystate)

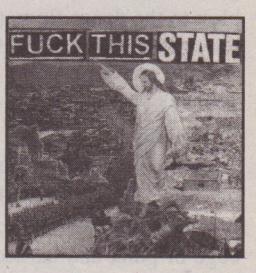
IRON LUNG – "Cancer/Life of Pain"

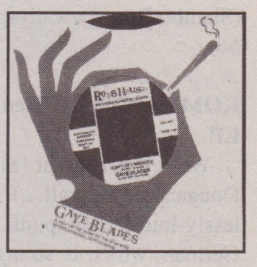
Cool single from this Seattle power-duo, featuring one original track—a heavy, plodding variation on CROSSED OUT's slow/slow/slow/fast template—and a surprisingly original take on a classic BLACK FLAG tune. The packaging is minimal, in the vein of other recent Iron Lung Records 7"s (WALLS, LORDS OF LIGHT), and I'd be willing to bet that this is a limited press, too. If you're a fan of this band, what are ya waitin' for? I suggest writing immediately to: (CS)
(Iron Lung, PO Box 95521, Seattle, WA 98145)

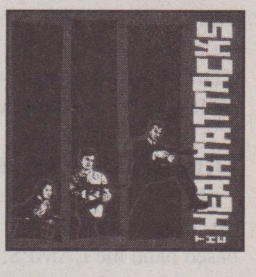
KIDS OF CARNAGE – "First Two Years: Discography!" CD

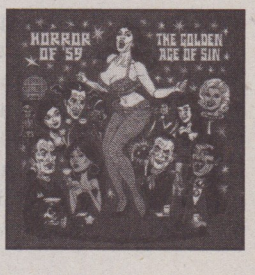
20 tracks of chugging mosh-core with lyrics that are basically all about how hard and true they are, except when they're whining about how emo isn't punk or how they're gonna beat up some other band with baseball bats because they're mall punks. If you too are a white dude who is hella pissed off about stuff and doesn't give a fuck what other people think, this may be the band for you. (PC)
(Give Praise, PO Box 494, Barnstable, MA 02630-0494, www.givepraiserecords.com)

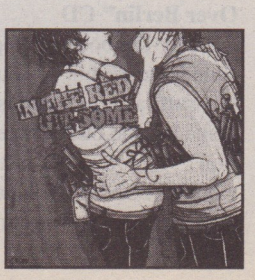












THE KING KHAN AND BBQ SHOW – "Teabag Party" EP

Five tracks from that retro-loving two-man-wrecking-crew and most if not all contain a homosexual or sexual theme. Taking a dose of that '60s frat boy stomp, some of that whirly-bird-freak-beat-shuffle, and a healthy sprinkling of late-'50s trash. It works its magic and has enough charm mixed with sex appeal to give any post drive-in movie party that special blast to the dance floor. (SD)
(Crypt, www.cryptrecords.com)

KNUCKLE PUCK – "Never Die, Suicide Party" EP

Hardcore/punk that is filled with the good ol' rage born of disillusioned youth. Well recorded and written songs that straddle the edge of punk and hardcore. Reminds me a bit of current shredders A.N.S. or WASTED TIME. (AA)
(Slambo Rat, www.myspace.com/slamboslambo)

KOMMUNEN – "Den Svenska Modellen" EP

Wow, this is great (as fellow reviewer Sean Dougan would call…) beer-can-winged-aimlessly-into-the-pit punk rock. I think they're German, which is strange because, of course, German punk usually sucks. These guys have an ear for tunes…oh here we go, they had to ruin it with the mandatory drunk silly bit…oh well. Still like it. (AD)
(Hardware, PO Box 1848, 49008 Osnabruck, GERMANY, www.hardware-records.com)

THE LAMPS – "Tim Ford/Cowboy"

This 7" rips (me) a new one! Two songs that are dingy, oozing, and pounding from LA-based band the LAMPS. The A-side is a rawer-than-Tony-Danza's-butthole ode to band member and said 7" sleeve star Tim Ford (the back of the sleeve is jaw dropping). It's a heavy rock driven and repetitive journey into dark sleaze territory. Does that sound boring? It's not. It's brutal. The flip compliments the first side with more rock 'n' roll sludge and vocals buried deep beneath the ever-drowning rhythm. (AL)
(Hook or Crook, 360 Grand Ave. #148, Oakland, CA 94610, www.hookorcrook.com)

THE LAST KILLERS – "Three Bombs Over Berlin" CD

A by-the-books garage band from Italy. It sounds good, but if you listen to as much of this stuff as I do, there is nothing here to really make it stand out. Where's the spark of inspiration? Where's the attitude? Covering the UNDERTONES' "Teenage Kicks" seems like a strange choice. It's done just like the original instead of trying to give it the same '60s garage sound of all the other songs on this CD. (CK)
(Area Pirata, www.areapirata.com)

LATEX NOVELTIES – "A Girls Best Friend" LP

Just when you get all smug in your know-it-all punk rock comfort zone, a lost treasure pops up from nowhere and slaps you straight back to reality. Hailing from the punk rock hotbed of Indianapolis; all the songs were recorded between '78 and '79. LATEX NOVELTIES takes a more aggressive approach to the golden era of power pop and propels themselves into the straight-up punk rock bracket without losing any of their pop sensibilities. A cheeky mix of the choppy quirkiness of DEVO, the beautiful pop of the UNDERTONES, the English sneer of the VIBRATORS, and a big dose of '79 mod revival. This one, readers, ranks in the must-have bracket for any lover of the history of modern punk, or basically any lover of punk, full stop. Check out track five, "Kiss and Make Up," about the conflict in Northern Ireland and just feel those shivers of awe and excitement. If that don't work, try track seven, "Born to Destroy." After that, if you ain't hailing this as one of the best punk rock finds in the last 20 years, you ain't got no soul. I think I've made the point. This is a must. (SD)
(Rave Up, www.raveuprecords.com)

LOPO DRIDO – CD

There's no contact info on this CD (except an email and a MySpace address—and everybody here knows I won't touch MySpace with a ten-foot pole), but if this band isn't from Spain, I'll relinquish my R.I.P. LP to the nearest S.P.A.S.M. and only listen to gringo music from now on. What I'm trying to say is that LOPO DRIDO has the classic Spanish punk sound—catchy, melodic punk with big guitars and forceful, clearly sung vocals (*en español*, of course). Surf and rock elements complete this solid—if not terribly urgent or memorable—thirteen-track album. (CS)
(lopodrido@hotmail.com)

LICK LICK – CD

Interesting rock music from Austin. Each song has a million different parts. At its best it's like the BREEDERS meets NOMEANSNO; at other times, more like MR. BUNGLE meets MODEST MOUSE. Do you dare? (PC)
(Australian Cattle God, 1306 E. 6th St., Austin, TX 78702, www.australiancattlegod.com)

LIMB FROM LIMB – "Death, Famine, Plague" LP

Fucking A! You headbanger fucks are in luck! No Options Records from mighty Oakland, California has unleashed some brutal metal on you twits! *Death, Famine, Plague*, the new LP by LIMB FROM LIMB, is a merciless assault on the senses! This is metal with a capital "M," successfully making the bridge between HELLSHOCK and SLAYER fucking great! Side A warms up with "Disjointed from All Logic" and then slams into "Relentless Torment." "Death Cycle" prepares you for "Train Wreck." Fuck yes!! Side B ups the ante with the chaotic, fast-as-fuck "Accept This Offspring." Fucking brilliant! Song two, "Old Fools" continues to bludgeon you! LIMB FROM LIMB carries on with "We Are Condemned" and then they finish the full-on metal onslaught with "Final Unholy Judgment." This is anthemic, blood-curdling metal recommended for the staunch and true headbanger! Get the *Death, Famine, Plague* LP/CD at once! (BR)
(No Options, PO Box 22285, Oakland, CA 94623, www.nooptionsrecords.com)

MARCHING ORDERS – "Dead End Street" CD

Seven-song CD from Melbourne, Australia's MARCHING ORDERS. Straight-up street punk played aggro-style by a bunch of Aussie baldies. MARCHING ORDERS plays no-frills-no-spills-in-yer-face riffage with some neat rock 'n' roll leads. Normally a lot of this boot-boy punk falls into the plodding, lackluster trap, but fortunately for these P.O.H.M.S there's enough power, integrity, and trips to the practice room to elevate this above the sea of crap usually found in this camp. (SD)
(Three Stars, www.myspace.com/threestarsrecords)

DAN MELCHIOR – "Madame Nhu/So Real"

Mr. Melchior's latest features a snappy musical-hall rock 'n' roll (think *Face to Face*-era KINKS) tribute (more or less) to the Commie-hating former First Lady of S. Viet Nam. Flip is subdued, somewhat ethereal, and a bit long and repetitive for my taste. (DD)
(Plastic Idol, www.plasticidolrecords.com, mario@plasticidolrecords.com)

MEMPHIS CREEPS – "Frustration & Lies" CD

These modern-day Karl Mays successfully weld a hell-bent-for-something street punk sound to a Southern-Fried-as-imagined-from-Deutschland aesthetic (or maybe I'm just being misled by stellar beer guts and fondness for animal print designs). These guys are either dumb enough or smart enough to make song titles like "Pizza Schnitzel" and "Big Boobs" and lyrics like "That was the day I fucked your

mom," work, no small feat. *Ist gut!* (DD)
(Meatgrinder Division, mental-gyros@web.de)

MISERY INDEX / MUMAKIL – "Ruling Class Cancelled" CD

MISERY INDEX is another band that I've always heard about but never had the time to check out. Blast-beat and double-bass drums galore. Nothing too surprising here. Fits in well with the newer metal scenes. Fans of JOB FOR A COWBOY and Relapse Records will enjoy this. MUMAKIL is a different ferocious animal all together. Holy fuck, this is the reason why you need to beat in the head of the guy who was going to waste money on the new BLEEDING THROUGH or AVENGED SUCKFOLD record with an axe handle and put the MUMAKIL half of the CD in his mouth and make him suck it. A quick, violent curb job is what you'll get from this four piece from Switzerland. This is what MASTODON should sound like. Gigantic, colossal, ass-pounding, crushing-your-skull, and leaving an immense path of devastation in its wake. Truly awe-inspiring. *You must* seek this out!!! Then look at their website and download a *twelve* track demo for free! God, I love the interweb. I only hope these guys make it to these shores some time soon. *Astounding*. (JH)
(Power It Up, Zum Holzfelde 12, 31226 Peine, GERMANY, www.power-it-up.de)

LOS MONJO – "Cerdos" EP

This EP fucking rules, sounding like a lost Spanish punk record from the '80s, not unlike a rawer ESKORBUTO (when in fact they are a current band from Mexico). Mid-tempo, with hoarse vocals and catchy as hell choruses, this is a definite keeper, especially for fans of Spanish punk. (TB)
(Todo Destruido, tododestruido@gmail.com)

MORAL DILEMMA – "Right to Remain Silent" CD

Ten punchy tracks by this UK three-piece, playing straight-ahead punk—kind of basic Ye Olde UK82-influenced punk rock a la the RESTARTS. This actually comes off more "modern" because of a decent heft to the recording, prominent bass lines, and the distinctively post-'90s, modern, crisp, club mix, upfront, snare drum sound. Fortunately, this keeps its feet out of the "mall punk" genre that uses a lot of those same elements by having raw, spit out, and impassioned vocals that give it an early Gilman Street "East Bay" swagger, punctuated with sharp female back-up vocals. Lyrics also are punker than punk, carrying the flag against corporations, the military, and politicians, and the CD ends with a CLASH/POGUES-ish waltz (with harmonica?) against state-sanctioned terrorism. Incorporating all of these together, this CD is a distinctive and solid listen. (KS)
(Madman, www.madmanrecords.co.uk)

MxVxD – "Schnell. Laut. Primitiv...Von '89 bis '01 Hate Record Collection" CD

A discography CD from this long-running Berlin D-beat band. This covers their releases from 1989-2001. Raging, sloppy punk D-beat that is just as much CONFLICT as it is DISCHARGE. The sameness of the songs started to wear on me after awhile, as I don't need to hear 46 tracks in a row of this. This is an interesting time-frame to hear a crust band's sound progress. The tracks from their split with PINK FLAMINGOS (1994) are faster and more hardcore sounding that their earlier punk tracks. The vocals get gruffer and screamed and the songs are faster. (MH)
(Truemmer Pogo, www.truemmer-pogo-tapes.de.vu)

NAZI DEATH CAMP – "We're Not Special, Just Retarded" EP

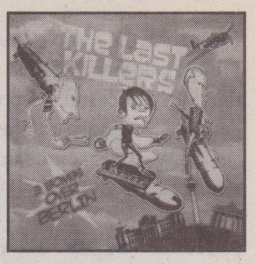
Finnish punk goes Rip Off Records??? That's NAZI DEATH CAMP in a nutshell. Simple, short, and snotty songs with words like "Baby" and "Gonna" in the song titles. One of the dudes is wearing sunglasses too. If you haven't heard a record in twelve years, you'd probably think this was the greatest thing ever. For the rest of us, it's snoozeville. (MC)
(Psychedelica, www.psychedelica.fi)

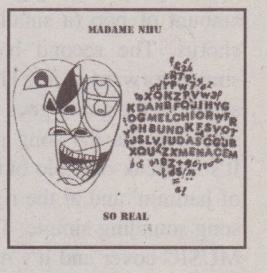
NEEDLES – "Twisted Vision" EP

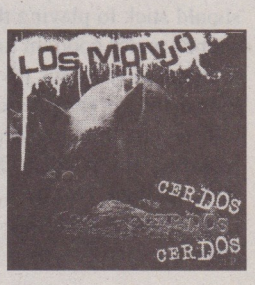
If someone told you about a new hardcore band with a rhythm section featuring Brian and Jim from TALK IS POISON, Martin from LOS CRUDOS/LIMP WRIST on vocals, Scott from LIMP WRIST on guitar, and Zane ex-NEVER HEALED also on guitar, you would probably be psyched, right? It is kind of a copout when reviewers just drop the "ex-members of..." rather than going straight into talking about the current band situation, but when the ex-member line-up is as stellar as that, what is a girl to do? It would be hard to screw up a band featuring a line-up like that, and believe me, no one is screwing up anything on this record. Having seen them play live once I was blown away and instantly had that "new favorite band" feeling, which I hadn't really felt about any local bands since maybe the first time I saw PELIGRO SOCIAL, and the girl in the blood covered jump suit did the worm in the pit. Martin is one of the greatest frontmen in modern hardcore and it's just so rad to see him in a band that plays more than once a year, you know? This is totally brutal with a claustrophobic feel; the lyrics are classic paranoid hardcore, combining the personal with the political, but rather than ending up with a '90s Ebullition lyric style—bleugh, whenever political and personal are combined that's generally what people bring up—they remind me more of maybe the JERRY'S KIDS' alienated classic "Lost." I can't wait to see and hear what they do next, if this 7" is anything to go by. The packaging looks great too—silk-screened silver on black paper. (LG)
(Lengua Armada, 1302 Hayes St, San Francisco, CA 94117, martincrudo@yahoo.com)

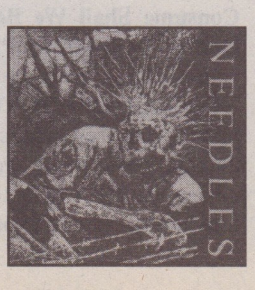
NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE – "Mindless Violence" EP

At first listen, NIGHSTICK JUSTICE has a sound combining inventive, change-of-pace hardcore that recalls MINOR THREAT (second EP), and mixes it up with a JERRY'S KIDS-type intensity. They hail from Half Moon Bay, CA, but the six tracks here are definitely world class, with production that's thick and tinged with









feedback; the lyrics cover topics of personal protest (violence against women at shows, with the added pressure of cops), and always seem genuine. Strongly recommended. (SS)
(Even Worse, Saenredamstraat 44-2, 1072 CH Amsterdam, HOLLAND, noel@outlet.nl)

NORTH SIDE KINGS – "Suburban Royalty" LP

Fuck! Hold on to your jockstraps, you fucks! The NORTH SIDE KINGS have come to destroy your hippie-punk ass! This thrash metal/punk hammer will have the hairs on your neck standing up! The music is fast, the vocals are gruff, and the lyrics are right on the money. If you like LIMECELL and DEATHTOLL, give this a spin! These Arizona tough guys think about day-to-day life situations and make intelligent decisions based on past experience. This is a great record with lots of heavy-hitting guitar punishment. This would be a perfect record to drink to! You get a cover of JFA's "Guess What" and a blood curdling cover of "Just Can't Hate Enough" by SHEER TERROR. Get it! (BR)
(More Brains, www.northsidekings.net)

NOTHING PEOPLE – "In the City/A Really Good Time"

This is pretty groovy. The first half of the song is simple, straightforward upbeat rock with slightly droning guitars and just the right amount of pop (a small dose) for the catchy chorus. The second half of the song isn't straightforward at all. The rhythm remains the same but the guitar goes off on a mellow psych solo that fits the song pretty much perfectly. It's no freak-out solo but just the right amount of jammin' and at the right tempo to keep the song sounding simple. The B-side is a ROXY MUSIC cover and it's A-OK but compared to the A-side, it makes me feel that this band should stick to playing their own tunes. It also sounds pretty good on the wrong speed, which to me usually means it's a good song. For you kids that care, it's pressed on clear vinyl. This will be stuck in my head on the way home, replacing the YOKO ONO song that's been there for days. (MU)
(S-S, 1114 21st St, Sacramento, CA 95811, www.s-srecords.com)

NUCLEAR DEATH TERROR – "As We Consume Shall We Be Consumed. As We Destroy Be Destroyed" EP

Bulldozing dark crust from Denmark—NUCLEAR DEATH TERROR has guttural male vocals, dual guitars, and a nice noisy production. These tracks were originally released on cassette. NUCLEAR DEATH TERROR is heavier than a lot of D-beat bands without venturing too far into metal. I hate to say this, but yeah, it reminds me of DOOM and a lot of early UK crust bands. I know it's not a competition between bands but damn I enjoyed this so much more than the MxVxD CD I reviewed this month. One of the better crusty releases I've heard in a while. (MH)
(D-Takt & Råpunk, PO Box 12-114, 79 Stockholm, SWEDEN, skitliv666@gmail.com)

NUNSLAUGTER / UNHOLY GRAVE – split EP

Midwestern '80s devil-metal pioneers split a 7" record with Nagoya, Japan grind terrorists and the ending result is "Mission Accomplished." A brutal, evil record that showcases two different but equally menacing styles. NUNSLAUGHTER brings us two tracks of razor buzzsaw guitars and asphalt, blood choked vocals. On the flip, UNHOLY GRAVE takes over with four tracks of their patented lo-fi noise barrage, helping make this vinyl platter pretty damn tasty. And the fucking packaging is simply a work of art. Just a side note, the guy who puts out Hell Headbangers Records is one dedicated motherfucker. The time and effort he spends on all of his releases shows…they all look amazing. You should give him all of your money. Rent? Electric bill? *Bitch pleeeeeeaase!!* This record has two different color package versions…buy both, pop open some Blatz beer and rock the fuck out…with devil horns in the air. (JH)
(Hells Headbangers, 3593 Medina Rd, #109, Medina, Ohio 44256, www.hellsbangers.com)

OFFSIDES / RIPSHIT – split EP

RIPSHIT packs their side of this vinyl with SPITBOY-meets-7-SECONDS hardcore that has urgent and fierce trading vocals, and some neat changes that sets them apart. OFFSIDES plays similarly raging thrashy punk, with sharp political critiques making up the majority of the lyrics. A less muddled recording would serve both bands well, but whatevs, that's punk, better lo-fi than over-finessed. (AA)
(Spicy Soup, www.myspace.com/spicysoupproductionsct)

ONION FLAVORED RINGS – "Perfect Evolution" EP

At first I wasn't real sure about this one; I was thinking it might be a little too "emo" for me. Now it's starting to grow on me. It actually reminds me of the MINUTEMEN for some reason, and I had the same issues with them. It's catchy. It's mid-tempo. And there is entirely too much singing going on. More yelling please. (KK)
(Thrillhouse, PO Box 460207, San Francisco, CA 94146, www.thrillhouserecords.com)

PELLINORE – "Momento Mori" EP

With this New Jersey band culling a band name from Arthurian legend, the lyrics about steadying your horse and torture dungeons are kind of expected. Where the other lyrics mire in depression and anger, spit out with CIRCUS LUPUS styled scowling vocals over angular and noisy AmRep/powerviolence-y dirge, that bookends simple yet pointed thrash beatings. Similar to the territory mined by the ABC No Rio—BORN AGAINST, RORSHACH—scene of the late-'80s/early-'90s, fusing hardcore with the art-damaged zeitgeist of the time. Nicely packaged in a fold-over sleeve with medieval-y drawings of angels and dragons. This is a unique, listenable, and solid debut. (KS)
(Free Cake, 15 Puddingstone Ln, Oak Ridge, NJ 07438, www.freecakefreecake.com)

THE PENETRATORS – "Teenage Lifestyle/Gotta Have Her"

Lo-fi garage punk from the year 2000. "Teenage Lifestyle" is a catchy garage rocker, which is good, but doesn't leave much of an impression. "Gotta Have Her" is similar, with a dash of the STOOGES and the LYRES. This song is actually quite a rocker and definitely more memorable. (KK)
(Slovenly, PO Box 204, Reno, NV 89504, www.solvenly.com)

PRIZZY PRIZZY PLEASE – CD

When I trained as a reviewer here, I was told not to refer to the onesheets sent in with CDs—but sometimes it's hard not to. The onesheet that came with this CD says: file under "indie/rock," and claims that they emerged from the Bloomington, IN "rock" scene but really, they aren't hipsters. Yuck! Why did they even bother sending this to *MRR* for review? Firstly, who describes their music as "Rock," except for fucking DEEP PURPLE? "Yeah baby, I play in a *rawk* band, you should check us out sometime…" Plus, why would you say you were or weren't a hipster? So lame and unnecessary and straight-up embarrassing, three words that very much describe this band's record! The cover kind of reminded me of a less neon RISD/Fort Thunder style and upon seeing it my heart kind of sunk. Just because that art style is close to a decade old now, and it would be rad if people would *move on with their lives*! Musically, this band would be perfect playing a hipster frat party. It's kind of celebratory music like a less ironic/interesting/intelligent ANDREW WK but with a college-rock heart. Meaning this *is* college rock. This is music for 18-year-old girls who

got into music through DEATH CAB FOR CUTIE to feel underground whilst puking at their first kegger. I have no idea why they would want a review in *MRR* at all. (LG)
(Let's Pretend, PO Box 1663, Bloomington, IN 47402, www.myspace.com/letspretendrecs)

THE RAMONES – "Return to London" LP

So here it is, yet another RAMONES bootleg for all you super fans that need every piece of memorabilia that has the band's name on it. This one documents the band's February 25th, 1985 show in London and features their third drummer Ritchie Ramone. Ritchie Ramone was notorious for playing their songs twice as fast and you can definitely hear it in this recording. Contains most of the staple RAMONES songs: "Blitzkreig Bop," "Do You Remember Rock 'n' Roll Radio?," etc. The sound quality is also pretty good—all the songs are recognizable and clear sounding. The layout seems actually somewhat professionally done unlike some boots I've seen. I personally think live records are kind of a waste, especially since there about a dozen other live RAMONES records. This is a good purchase for anyone who likes the RAMONES just a little too much. (PL)
(bootleg, no address)

THE REACTION – "Right Now" LP

These guys seem like they give a shit, which always tears my opinion. There're good songs at the bottom, but the acrobatic, "great" guitar playing is kind of distracting. I mean, you can see they're going for that GREG GINN thing with the ridiculously out-of-hand guitar, and it achieves that. Still, I'm frustrated because the basic songs are really understated, economical, and no bullshit—all pluses, obviously—but then the "experimentation" occasionally kills the well-crafted simplicity. Maybe I'm just a fucking idiot. (JP)
(Starcleaner, www.starcleaner.com)

THE REAL SWINGER – "England's Rose/Talk of the Town"

The title track is the MISFITS' "Bullet" with different lyrics. I don't see the point—especially as the flipside, which I assume is their own material, is pretty good. Melodic yet noisy punk with a nice riff and good hooks...maybe it is a cover too...there's absolutely no information here. I'm guessing Italian. (AD)
(Prince of Wales, www.myspace.com/realswinger

REPERCUSSIONS – "No Peace" EP

Fans of last year's blistering REPERCUSSIONS 12" will already have grabbed this, and for good reason. This latest EP on Feral Ward manages to top that 12" for dark, dense hardcore. Fast, tight, and deceptively complex riffs buzz beneath some of the most paranoid, suicidal, and hopeless lyrics this side of *The Bell Jar*. Somebody bake this guy some cupcakes and cheer the fucker up, eh? Joking aside, great record. (AM)
(Feral Ward, www.feralward.com)

RIOT BRIGADE – "Break Addiction" CD

These Krauts look like a fashionably spiky street punk act, what with their bullet belts, leopard print hair, mohicans, and CASUALTIES t-shirts, but their sound is pure '80s hardcore. In fact, if they didn't have an anti-straight edge song and didn't print band photos in their CD booklet, I'd have guessed they were nouveau-youth crew. Actually, a closer look at their lyrics reveals a political bent absent from most sXe bands. Most of the fifteen songs on the album zip past at the same breakneck pace, but track eight, "Masked Charity" is the closest they come to approaching a ballad. An acoustic intro gives way to a medium-paced, gruffly melodic punk pop song that is up there with anything RANCID or SOCIAL DISTORTION has done lately (or maybe ever...). If RIOT BRIGADE wrote a whole album like this they'd probably be the next big thing. (AM)
(MSM1279/Concrete Jungle, PO Box 810427, 90249 Nürnberg, GERMANY, www.concretejunglerecords.com)

SACRED SHOCK – "Deadlines" EP

From the blasted remnants of ARMY OF JESUS comes THE FIGHTING GINGER KNOME AND THE TEXAS SQUIRRELS otherwise known as SACRED SHOCK. Six songs with enough power to floor an angry rhino at 60 paces. This is fuckin' pissed-off-Texas-style, with some the best stop-on-a-dime twists and turns I've heard in a long time. Never getting caught up in the math with the Tonka-size-bulldozer-riffs mixed with the LIFE'S BLOOD ol' school choruses, driven by the power of a stripped down FUCKED UP with the added spice of some great BLACK FLAG inspired hooks. Six of the best hardcore tunes I've heard in a very long time—now I'm off to add another two inches on to my beard. (SD)
(Shogun, 2 Rue De La Colinette, 51110 Bourgogne, FRANCE, burn.out@wanadoo.fr)

SAYAKA – "Conscript Me" EP

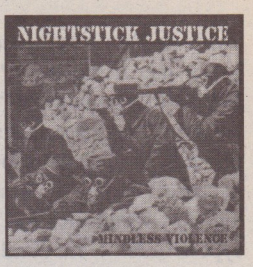
Semi-competently played, bullet-belt-adorned, hair-metal-on-a-punkcore-trip. There are enough solos and palm mutes in the title track to last me a lifetime. By rocking a shitter of solos they set before themselves a technical challenge of crucial proportions. Unfortunately their technicalities deserve little consideration. (P$)
(Police & Thieves, 1812 Ford B, Austin, TX 78704, www.policeandthieves.org)

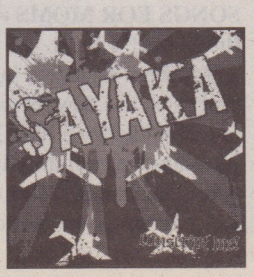
SECRETIONS – "Blast Off" EP

This band has been around forever, and they sound pretty much like they ever did; snotty pop punk like the QUEERS or SCREECHING WEASEL. It's definitely more punk than pop, and the production is great, it's just that I've heard it before (a lot). (TB)
(Gearhead, PO Box 1386, Woodland, CA 95776, www.gearheadrecords.com)

SERIOUS – "Japanese Rock & Roll" EP

"I am American...you are Japanese...no matter where you're from, there's only one way to say, Rock and Roll!" *Are you fucking kidding me*??? What's the next 7", "We're All Pink on the Inside?" "Look Both Ways?" Yeesh...then the next song combines two themes that





really need to be touched in pop music: "beer gives me a hangover" and "work sucks." Follow that up with the "ooh we're so un-PC" song that every sperm-stain band like this simply *has* to include about beating up chicks because "they're such stupid fucking bitches and they won't fuck me." Go back to sitting at typewriters randomly banging out Shakespeare. (JP)
(High School Reject, Berlageweg 12, 9731 LN Groningen, NETHERLANDS, www.myspace.com/seriouspunk)

SICK FIX – "Junkie Fever" EP

Heavy, distorted hardcore with rapid drumming and screamed female vocals that brings HEALTH HAZARD to mind. This record has elements of powerviolence but does not stray too far from hardcore roots. Message-wise, lyrics are targeting drug/alcohol abuse, body politics, and rape, and all of this is delivered with ferocity and passion. (MS)
(Third Party, 1349 N Bell Ave, Chicago, IL 60622, www.thirdparty.com)

SOFT SHOULDER – "Hit Single/ Temperary"

The first song is called "Mary Ann" and it starts out sounding like old movie hiss over slow free-jazz; I was into it and I started to settle into let's-listen-to-this-noise-record mode and then it suddenly switched out into a drum beat that reminded of being in a basement and having my mind blown by some weird out-of-town band when I was 16. Fully grunged-out three-chord riffage with a girl doing vocals like the FLYING LIZARDS did on that BEATLES cover. Then the picked-out chorus is so NIRVANA, if they had been quiet during the chorus. The first side of this 7" is like each one of my musical obsessions rolled into one in a really fucking good way. The second side is pretty OK; it's more punk with a free-noise jam-out in the middle of it. Really, side A is so pants-crappingly awesome that side B could have been farting on a snare drum and I might have thought it was OK. Not to say that "Temporary" (get it? They're from Tempe, TEMPErary? Ha-ha.) is a bad track, it just doesn't compare. (MM)
(Gilgongo, PO Box 7455, Tempe, AZ 85281, www.gilgongorecords.com)

SONGS FOR MOMS – "The Worse It Gets the Better" LP

Maybe it's just me but I kind of dread that first listen to a new record by a band I've come to really like from their live shows. I'm afraid it'll sound overproduced, or underproduced, or boring, or that it'll turn out that they have the worst lyrics in the world, or... So many anxieties and we haven't even heard the record yet! Well, I'm glad to report that the SONGS FOR MOMS LP passes the test with flying colors. This Bay Area trio plays bouncy punk rock with great harmonies and some odd time signatures. It's a unique sound that's also very accessible. I'm reminded of TIGER TRAP in the excellent, energetic drumming and jangly guitars, and a bit of the country (*not* "folk punk") influence of THIS BIKE IS A PIPE BOMB. The recording sounds just like they do live, only way better; you can hear all the parts but it doesn't sound super professional. There's a good a variety of songs, and the lyrics totally don't suck. Phew! (PC)
(Starcleaner, www.starcleaner.com)

SPACEBLOOD – CD

If you like (I'm sure they do) the HUMPERS, DEAD BOYS, and their ilk, you might dig this. SPACEBLOOD seems sincere and rocks out adequately enough. Their songs are about being a fuck-up, being fucked over by the bitches, etc. They obviously live it like they call it, 'cos they were too out of it to put any contact details anywhere on the CD. Dude really does have that Stiv Bators inflection down, though. Gotta give credit where it's due. (RK)
(Kill, www.myspace.com/httpwwwmyspacecomspaceblood)

SQUALORA – "And So They Died Miserably Ever After" LP

This is decidedly not the generic metallic crust that is pervasive in the scene. SQUALORA is mixing things up with some very unexpected and beautiful moody landscapes that break into all-out raging thrash attacks. This shit is not only well played, but it is masterfully conceived. The lyrics are smart and engaging takes on what is usually summed up in chorus of "fuck the system," which although it's a sentiment we can all appreciate it deserves to be pulled apart and really contemplated. (AA)
(Defector, PO Box 3921, Portland, OR 97208, www.thedefector.com)

STAKES – "Real Tigers" CD

Most of the time when I hear that a band that has two singers, I immediately get turned off, and STAKES is no exception. This LA band plays hardcore music that is self-righteous jock core similar to BANE or COMEBACK KID. The only redeeming aspect of *Real Tigers* was the use of tigers and basketball jerseys in the layout. Oh wait, I forgot that it's not 1996 anymore. (PL)
(High Fidelity, PO Box 1071, Grover Beach, CA 93483, www.highfidelityrecords.com)

THE STEAL – CD

Aw man, from the look of this I was really hoping I'd get to rip into some weak-ass wannabe PROMISE RING dookie. Oh well. What I really get to listen to is fourteen tracks of catchy, hooky hardcore bordering on pop punk which puts this UK band somewhere in league with PAINT IT BLACK, KID DYNAMITE, and their ilk. It's got all the shit you'd expect from that description: lots o' fast parts, cute and quirky li'l guitar/bass breaks, and gang choruses. This is OK but the above bands do this shit much, much better. (JU)
(Get Outta Town, PO Box 4094, Winter Park, FL 32793-4094, www.getouttatownrecords.com)

TAIL – "Greater Than You Hells Underground" EP

Every once and a while, and that's a big while nowdays, a record comes completely out of the blue and gives ya an almighty haymaker straight to the floor. It's only January and I've already received my first one-punch KO. I do hope that this is a sign. Mixing the best elements of dirty garage, power pop, and straight-up street punk resulting in one of the best hybrids I've feasted my lugs on in a long time. Imagine the FM KNIVES being interbred with the pinkest moments of the BELTONES and I guess you'd be on the right track. Every song is an anthem, played with an energy overload that would put all the Gatorade in China to shame—tunes that stick like shit to a blanket that contain more passion than a '40s flick with a happy ending. Even their cover of "Suspect Device" puts the testosterone level in the red. (SD)
(Self-released, gabba.tail@lycos.es)

TALKSICK – "Waste" CD

Street punk that is not half bad for it's generic-ness. Sounds like SUBINCISION meets ANTI-FLAG or the VIRUS. Which was a surprise. My one word review: whatever. (AA)
(Talk Sick, www.talk-sick.com)

TEENAGE BOTTLEROCKETS – "Warning Device" LP

If there were a list of folks who ought to be reviewing current pop punk played by blokes in leather jackets and Chuck Taylors, I would be somewhere near the bottom. Our esteemed CD assigner, however, knew of my two notable exceptions—SCREECHING WEASEL and the LILLINGTONS. What we have here, ladies and gents, is the new band featuring the singer of the LILLINGTONS...soooooo, it *rules*. Yes, it has elements of the RAMONES, yes it's all very verse/chorus/verse/chorus, but shit, that guy Kody Templeman can write *songs*. Sound-

wise it falls somewhere between the absolute untouched genius of the LILLINGTONS and the sometimes brilliant SCREECHING WEASEL. Production is spot-on, songs blast along, and they are so damn catchy. I keep finding myself reaching for the repeat button. If you need one sing-a-long punk disc this year (or even decade), you could do way worse than this! (TB)
(Red Scare, www.redscare.net)

THREATENER – "...And the Bending of Throats" EP

I saw THREATENER at a house show in Ann Arbor, Michigan when I still lived in Ohio and it was pretty crazy. The living room was so small that the guitarists and singer were always being pushed back into the drummer. I miss shows like that. Anyhow, on with this review...the first thing I noticed was that the cover art looked familiar, like a WOLF EYES record or something. And it should, because it was done by Mr. John Olson of the aforementioned band. Fast, thrashy, and short...very short and the ten tracks are over before you know it. This band broke up a while ago so not sure if this is a "last will and testament" type thing or what. But if you liked their previous offerings, this won't disappoint. Fans of IRON LUNG should dig this, if you know what's good for you. True Midwestern hardcore. (JH)
(625 Thrash, www.625thrash.com)

TOYOTAS – "Run-Down Cities" EP

A Euro band that plays speedy as hell punk with squealed vocals. A vague classic UK vibe coupled with the standard melodic punk trappings doesn't make for much excitement tune-wise, but the guitars are really clean and choppy here, making everything sound frantic as hell. Nice trick, Houdinis. My guess? Swedish...though Germany is a possibility. (MC)
(P.Trash, www.ptrashrecords.com)

12CENT – "For the Win!" CD

From the looks of this, with titles like "Boner City," "We're a Bunch of Dicks," and "Smell My Knee," I thought this was gonna be "stupid punk" hell. Somewhere in between CRIMPSHRINE and NOFX, surprisingly *Face the Win!* was decent sloppy punk/hardcore with a nice addition of keyboards. Granted Strummer/Jones this ain't; this is fun stuff from this San Diego (formerly Boston) band. (RL)
(Olde Tyme, www.12cent.com)

UGLY LAW – "Good Life" EP

UGLY LAW is a new band from Richmond, VA made up of a bunch of old-timers. One of the members was originally in mid-'80s Richmond hardcore band UNSEEN FORCE. I am going to review this record in two parts because I think UGLY LAW's chosen song order is lopsided. The "Ugly"-side sounds like American hardcore's logical next step—these songs would be great to play for anyone that thinks hardcore has nothing new or interesting to offer. The bass sound is huge, the guitars and drums run amok, and I imagine that they've enlisted some feral, mental reject for the vocal duties. The instruments collide to create something I can only refer to as demented fury. The "Law"-side starts off in the same vein but the last two songs lose my interest—they're a little too quirky and thin-sounding for my taste. At any rate, I'll be paying attention to these freaks in the future, 'cos judging from the A-side, UGLY LAW has some interesting new ideas to add to the hardcore palette. (CI)
(Atavistic, www.myspace.com/uglylaw)

LES VANDALES – "Loup-Garou" EP

It is so rare that a record from a band I've never heard from punk's golden age gets released or re-released and the shit is so damn ripping! LES VANDALES formed somewhere in France in '84, did a demo, and had some songs on comp tapes, but never released a record. This is the record that should have been. *Loup-Garou* was recorded in '85 and was slated to be released on Jungle Hop but it never happened. I can't say enough how good this 7" is. This thing will fit in fine amongst your classic mid-'80s Euro hardcore records. It's fully raging and with the bounce of bands like R.I.P. or a more hardcore ASTA KASK. *Aaaarrrggghhh*! Seek it out at all cost! (JU)
(Self-released, www.myspace.com/lesvandales)

LA VENDETTA – "Amanece en el Infierno" CD

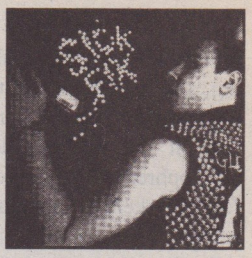
Whooooaaaa, hardcore. Whoooaaaa, hardcore in Spanish! Sung by a girl. I love it already. LA VENDETTA hails from Colombia and this CD has a huge amount of liner notes that are fully in Spanish, which is awesome except for the fact that I don't know enough Spanish to translate them that well. However, the lyrics are translated; they're all about smashing the state (Smash the State in 2008!) and other political hardcore topics. There are only six songs and they rage by pretty fast and are pretty metal-tinged. "Amanece en el Infierno" translates to "Sunrise in Hell," I really like that. So far I've listened to this three times and it gets better every time. (MM)
(Dirección Positiva, www.direccionpositiva.tk)

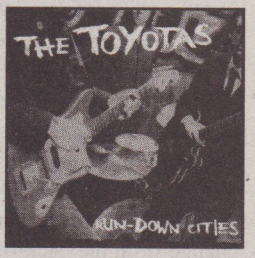
VICIOUS CYCLE – "Neon Electric" EP

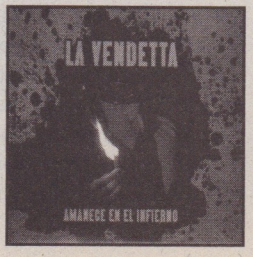
This record is short, fast, and awesome early-'80s hardcore like BLACK FLAG or MINOR THREAT. The vocals remind me a lot of the singer of STRIKING DISTANCE, so basically it sounds like an angry 40-year old man fronts the band. The lyrics aren't cliché like most bands playing this style today who sound like they are just taking notes from a previous band, changing a couple lines, and calling them their own. One of the only drawbacks that it could have been longer, but I guess it is better for a record to leave you wanting more than making you want to take it off the player and never see it again. (PL)
(Radio 81, c/o Simon Perusse, 2 - 1675 Boul. St-Joseph Est, Montreal, QC, H2J 1N1 CANADA, www.radio81records.com)

WALLS – LP

I've been awaiting this record's release for quite some time, long before I even heard it was coming out, simply because the 7" was such a tease. This LP is the sound that I will most definitely associate with my impending (and







inevitable) nervous breakdown. Slow, menacing, and lurching songs that reek of forthcoming doom and destruction that drop the listener straight into the middle of someone else's schizophrenic nightmare. WALLS needs no fancy trickery or pretension to get their point across, just ugly, uncomfortable, and difficult riffs. There are traces of so many things I like about aggressive underground music, including bits of AmRep-ery and RORSCHACH's discord, yet it's much more and totally still somehow "hardcore" to me. That's a feat in and of itself. Another element I really like about WALLS is that they don't need some fancy-schmancy bombastic production to drive home the heaviness. I know a lot of fools that don't like this band at all and while I can kinda see why it would be hard for someone to dig a record like this, I'll still say shame on them. Lucky for me that means when WALLS finally make a trip to the Bay Area, there will be less bored, useless people to wade through at the show. Awesome. (JU)
(Painkiller, 516 Green Street #1B, Cambridge, MA 02139, www.painkillerrecords.com)

WARCOLLAPSE – "Defy!" LP
Ahh, the long-awaited new WARCOLLAPSE! Hard to believe I am holding it in my hands. These guys have always been one of the more creative and least dogmatic sounding of the Swedish crust acts, and this just takes that reputation to its zenith. It's still crusty as your momma's apple pie, but it's also slow, pummeling, doomy (*not* like TRAGEDY so don't even say it!), dirge-y, and epic! You need this! (NM)
(Profane Existence, PO Box 18051 Minneapolis, MN 55418, www.profaneexistence.com)

WARWOLF – "Two Diverging Rivers" EP
Nine short songs sure to please any young teen recently turned onto punk. I picture lots of sixteen-year olds crammed into a small venue loving every note of this. But that ain't me. It's melodic, fast, and loud but also mediocre junk that sounds like every other mediocre hardcore band. The drums sound the same on every single song and the vocals only change from the back-of-the-throat screaming twice, and although it's nice to get a little vocal change, it's for the best this dude doesn't actually sing too much. It comes with a lyric sheet, which is needed to understand a single word, and the lyrics aren't actually all that bad, though also not my cup of tea. The guitars sound pretty good but overall this is mediocre music that would bore me to suicide if I ever had to see this band play for more than three minutes. (MU)
(Level Plane, PO Box 7926, Charlottesville, VA 22906, www.level-plane.com)

MARY WEISS – "Stop and Think It Over/I Don't Want to Know"
New single featuring two tracks from the recent MARY WEISS/REIGNING SOUND collaboration. When their full-length LP came out last year, it didn't make much of an impression on me, but I'm definitely liking this one, perhaps 'cause the format is a bit easier to digest. The A-side is a plaintive, upbeat number that appeared on the aforementioned LP; the flip, a slower track, is unreleased. Nice. (CS)
(Norton, Box 646 Cooper Station, New York, NY 10276, www.nortonrecords.com)

WHISKEY TRENCH – "The Good Sun" EP
Gosh, this sounds a lot like FUEL, the old San Francisco band (who in turn could be said to sound a lot like FUGAZI) from the early '90s. The rest of the songs sound more Gainesville-y a la PANTHRO UK and HOT WATER MUSIC. Actually, scratch the HWM comparison—they're not that tight—maybe GUNMOLL would be better. This is good stuff, emotionally charged, melodic, gruff punk that sounds like it was influenced a lot by all the bands that were influenced by LEATHERFACE. It stays upbeat though, which is usually the difference between good and boring. Duh. (AD)
(Dead Broke, 139 Huber Ave. Holbrook, NY 11741, www.deadbrokerekerds.com)

WOLFDOWNERS – "Wolf It Down" LP
The chaotic vibe of the members' more well known hardcore outfits carries over into this new project, which is more on the noisy, AmRep-inspired side of things. Make that *firmly* on that side of things. Gunk crammed in every available space, guitar freak-out that's either semi-tasteful or completely ridiculous. Fuck, just fairly absurd throughout. You either get it or you don't. *Wolf It Down* might merely be an excuse to "get weird," but it's not without a moment or two of quality. I'm all for heavy noise and drug vibes, but it just seems a tad forced here. Glad they gave it a shot though. (MC)
(Parts Unknown, P.O. Box 4835, Toms River, NJ 08754, www.partsunknowrecords.com)

ZOOPARTY – "You Are Here" CD
From Sweden, this new band kicks out some decent retro brat punk circa 1979. A mix of the SEX PISTOLS, SHAM 69, and TURBONEGRO. Guest appearances by BRIAN JAMES and GLEN MATLOCK drive home the sound. A good full-length, although the songs are not terribly original and are a bit predictable. Still this is done well and does punk out. (RL)
(Acme, PO Box 441, Dracut, MA 01826, www.acmerecords.net, www.zooparty.se)

V/A – "La Familia: United Worldwide" CD
Fucking awesome comp here. Actually it's more of a four-way split featuring OFF BALANCE (USA), QUESTIONS (Brazil), PROPIA ACTITUD (Mexico), and SLANG (Japan). Awesome international spirit here and these bands definitely make sense being on the same comp!! Most play a sort of tougher variant of NYHC with a somewhat more positive attitude! PROPIA ACTITUD is from Mexico and has a bit more of an old school sXe sound, and of course SLANG has the thick, Japanese HC style mixed in as well…overall, this is great!! (NM)
(Off Balance, PMB 187, 1075 Broad Rupple Ave, Indianapolis, IN 46220)

V/A – "Merry X-Mas Dammit From the Double Down Saloon" CD
I'm afraid this review is going to be too late to move any units for Xmas 2007, but maybe you want to plan ahead for the next holiday season. The Double Down connection puts me in a receptive enough frame of mind that this Xmas-themed album all goes by enjoyably at best and quite painlessly at worst, which is more than you can say for most holiday music. MURPHY'S LAW do a straightforward version of the BOB SEGER chestnut "Sock It to Me Santa," RICHARD CHEESE (one of the few worthwhile faux-lounge singers) does a nice tribute to Las Vegas Xmas, the BOMBORA's surf version of "Little Drummer Boy" makes an appearance, the VERMIN's "Santa Was A Cross-Dressing Nazi" is my fave of the many irreverent tunes included, the REAL SHAMES cover the SONICS' "Santa Claus," and that about sums up the parameters of this collection. It's no HUEY "PIANO" SMITH Xmas album, but it beats PERRY COMO. (DD)
(World Shampoo, PO Box 27801, Las Vegas, NV 89126, woodshampoo@gmail.com)

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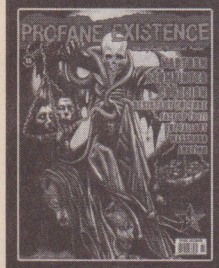

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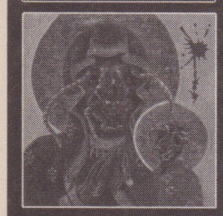

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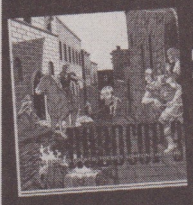

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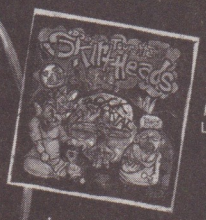

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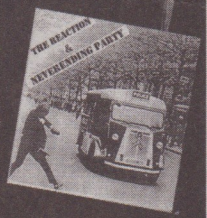

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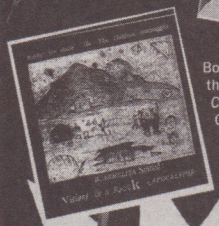

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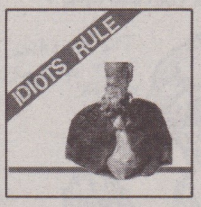

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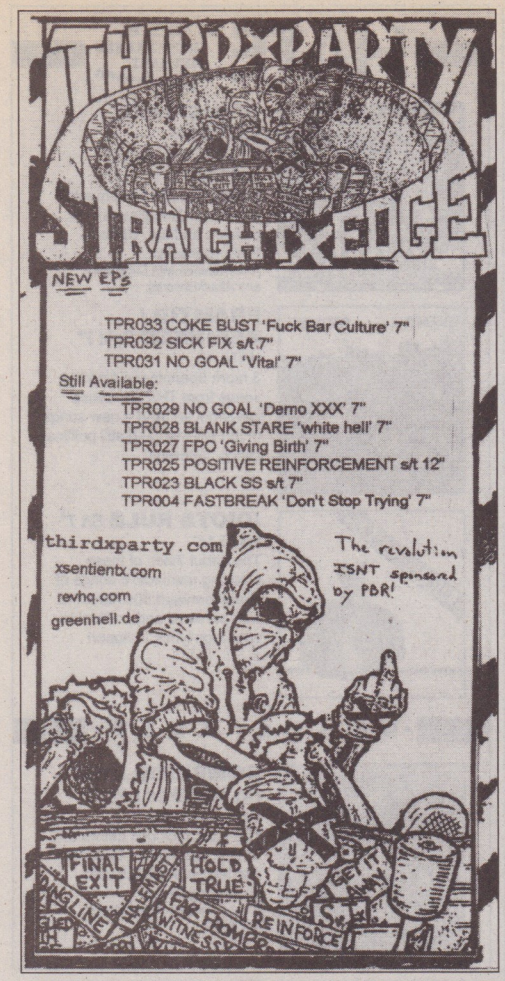

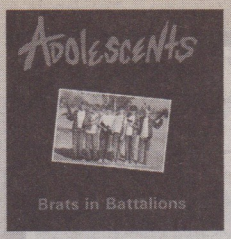

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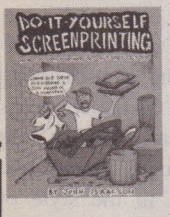

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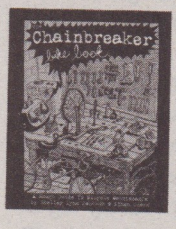

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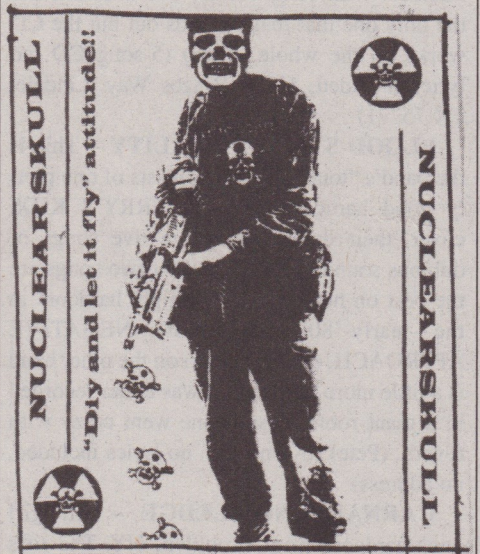

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DEMOS

Send demos and CD-Rs to: MRR attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please provide a postpaid price and a mailing address with your demo! Reviews by Peter Avery, Justin Briggs, Eric Butterworth, and Cissie Scurlock

ABRAHAM CROSS – On first listen over the big house speakers, I remembered why I was never fanatical about this Japanese band, but now on headphones I'm diggin' in and riding on with ABRAHAM CROSS. This tape combines their tracks from the *Terro-Rhythm, Tokyo Sound System*, and *Skate All Day, Drink All Night* comps from 2005, and the sole track from their split with SFP, along with eleven live tracks from shows in '05 and '07. ABRAHAM CROSS were/are (?) a beastly crust band that aren't afraid to dabble in some weirdness here and there, but for the most part this is straight-up growling, heavy and noisy, metallic crusty hardcore done the way you like it, fo sho! (Justin) (20-song cassette, some lyrics included, Black Konflik, No. 59, Lorong 3, TMN Kenanga, 27600 Raub, Pahang, Malaysia)

ALMIGHTY SOD HAULER – This demo should stand as a warning to all kids as to the dangers of getting stoned and playing music. The songs are excessively long and painfully slow. It's slow metal that is mostly instrumental with a wall of guitar and slow but solid drumming. The real problem is that they fail to fill the songs out with great musicianship and it gets pretty boring about eight minutes or so into a song. (Pete) (5-song CD, no lyrics included, 1324 25th Ave.., Seattle, WA 98144, sodhauler@hotmail.com)

ASH MONDAY – This is three songs of modern metalcore that gives a nod to such pioneering bands as RORSCHACH. The songs are fast with power chords mixing with quick brakes and chugging guitars. The vocals are mostly a throaty growl with a talking part here and there. It's an altogether solid CD. (Pete) (3-song CD, no lyrics included, 55A Milford Ave.., Whiting, NJ 08759)

BIG FUCKING MISSILE CRISIS – The deep growling vocals give the initial impression that the band plays super heavy, grinding metalcore. On further inspection of the actual music, the sound is more like RKL or a MÖTÖRHEAD-style rock with punk leanings. Sure it's fast and leans toward metal but it's still very punk. (Pete) (9-song CD, lyrics included, 423 E 33rd St. #B, Kansas City, MO 64109)

BLACK MATH – This Chicago duo creates electronic music that would be a killer soundtrack to a superhero movie with the protagonist running in slowmotion as a building is blowing up behind him/her. It sounds like they only use distorted vocals, a drum machine, and some sort of organ? It is a little different from what *MRR* usually reviews but I totally dig it. I don't know much about this music so I will steal who they say their influences are, BIG BLACK, DEPECHE MODE, and OMD. (Eric) (11-song cassette, no lyrics included, $3 ppd, 2152 W. Iowa St. #2, Chicago, IL 60622)

BLANKET OF M – The band plays melodic punk in a very '90s Southern California way. The music is more BIG DRILL CAR or FACE TO FACE than it is BAD RELIGION but it isn't pure pop-punk. The songs are fairly catchy, mostly mid-tempo numbers with sung vocals. The first track is the only one that really stands out but the CD works on the whole. (Pete) (5-song CD, no lyrics included, 11777 Brazos Way, Lindale, TX 75771)

BLOOD STAINED REALITY – This is the band's "tour" CD that consists of one pretty good hardcore song, a JERRY'S KIDS cover, their demo, and some live songs of dubious sound quality. The first two songs are the best on here. It's just straight hardcore in the early-'80s style of NEGATIVE APPROACH, etc. The demo on the other hand is a little more thrashy and was either recorded in a giant room or someone went crazy with reverb. (Pete) (8-song CD, no lyrics included, no address)

CARNAL KNOWLEDGE – All girl punk/hardcore from Brooklyn, NY. The riffs are crazy catchy like early-era REAGAN YOUTH with dashes of modern influences that I can't put my finger on. They accomplish the ever so difficult task of mid-tempo punk/hardcore without falling victim to boredom. Some of the angriest most heartfelt lyrics I've read from a new band in a long time that touch on a wide variety of subjects ranging from politics to personal relationships. I had the chance to see this band live and they don't disappoint. Don't sleep on this. (Eric) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, 131 Tompkins Ave., #2, Brooklyn, NY 11206, myspace.com/carnalk)

FORCED FAILURE – Don't let the SUICIDAL style cover with the skateboarding skeleton fool you, FORCED FAILURE reads straight from the late-'80s/early-'90s straight edge book with chugga chugga guitars and youth crew backing vocals in the style of CHAIN OF STRENGTH. (Pete) (5-song CD, no lyrics included, $2 ppd, 657 5th St., Arcata, CA 95521)

FRESH MEAT – Sounds like FRESH MEAT locked themselves in their basement one winter with a three-month supply of water, canned foods, and a copious amount of drugs. What was produced from that glorious winter was a four-track recording of some kick ass noisy punk songs. Musically they remind me of your favorite early era punk/hardcore (read: GERMS) but slowed down to perfection with a vocalist that is passed out under water. (Eric) (8-song cassette, no lyrics included, youngstud4069@gmail.com)

GREG COCAINE – This is two songs of punked up garage/rockabilly music. The rock 'n' roll riffs are played in a distorted hardcore sort of way with a vocalist who screams like they are in a hardcore band. The songs are a little sloppy but they are catchy and I like the idea. (Pete) (2-song CD, no lyrics included, www.mon-oeil.org)

IGNORANCE – Self-righteous, hateful, egomaniacal, typical hardline straight edge lives on in the form of IGNORANCE. So, "if you like this music you must be pissed, run around and throw your fists, violence can be positive…" IGNORANCE wants to "…see you bleed like a sieve." (Pete & Katy) (4-song CD, lyrics included, ignorancehc@gmail.com)

LOGIC PROBLEM – LOGIC PROBLEM is the newest vehicle of some ex-members of the recently defunct CROSS LAWS. I'm definitely hearing a bit of The FIX in these songs and that's not a comparison I throw around lightly. Seven tracks of fast and hooky hardcore with plenty of little stops and starts thrown in to break things up and snap some necks. (Justin) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, Sorry State, 1102 North Greensboro St., Carrboro, NC 27510, nick.goode@gmail.com)

THE MARX – The packaging of this demo is well thought out with typical communist art but the music and lyrics are nowhere near matching. Sift through your dad's old records, pull out an LP that plays on 33 but instead crank it to 45 and add a bar rock vocalist. Lyrically eight out of the nine songs are about women, so, no communism there. (Eric) (9-song CD, lyrics included, myspace.com/theemarx)

ME4TEZ – The CD contains 11 quick blasts of hardcore, so quick in fact that the one slow, trudging song is only about a minute long. Most of the songs contain fuzzy power chords over blast beats and high-pitched screams with some breakdowns. The better parts of the songs are when they get a little crazy and the guitars sound slightly off kilter. (Pete) (11-song CD, lyrics in Russian included, PO Box 359, Minsk 220050, Belarus, me4tez@mail.ru)

MONSTERS OF POT/THE MOJO SPLEENS – MOP is simply a noise group consisting of tone generators and distortion with some occasional distorted vocals in the background. The MAN IS THE BASTARD cover is just barely recognizable. THE MOJO SPLEENS are also noisy and chaotic but they play surf music. The classic, reverb heavy, surf guitar is given a little more distortion while the songs go from typical, mid-tempo surf to thrashy fast hardcore. It's very cool stuff. (Pete) (13-song cassette, no lyrics included, $3 ppd, 3313 3rd Ave. S, Minneapolis, MN 55408)

RAUNCHY SEX – This two-piece plays sort of spooky, lo-fi garage punk that sounds similar to the MISFITS. The lack of a bass is bothersome but the band does get a cool echo sound on their recording that makes it sound fuller. The problem of monotone vocals is a bit harder to overcome though. (Pete) (6-song CD, no lyrics included, $4 ppd, 84 Chestnut Hill Ln., Buffalo, NY 14221, noroomforyouth@hotmail.com)

RHYTHM SYNDROM – This bunch of newbies from Davis, CA have exploded onto the world with one hell of a demo. It's snotty, it's sloppy, it's fast as hell, and it's got hooks. I likey! (Justin) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, Mike Neswald, 1007 3rd St. #1, Davis, CA 95616, sneswald@netzero.net)

SACK LUNCH – The band plays generic but catchy pop-punk in the vein of THE ERGS and so on. The songs are up-beat with a fair amount of tempo changes, clever bass lines and snotty vocals. Unfortunately the tape transfer has led to extremely poor sound quality. (Pete) (8-song cassette, some lyrics included, no address)

SCREWED UP FLYER – This is about as straightforward as hardcore gets. The up-tempo drumming, power chords and sung/yelled vocals are done in an early-'80s hardcore style. It's short, simple, fist pumping, and catchy. (Pete) (6-song CD, lyrics included, $2 ppd, PO Box 295, Southampton S017 1LW, UK, screwedupflyer@hotmail.co.uk)

SECTION 802 – In an attempt to prove that I know more than you, I shall make a fairly obscure reference and say that this band reminds me of the Q FACTOR (actually, I just can't come up with anything else). It's fast hardcore with a nod to straight edge but also with a certain pop element or catchiness to it that makes you feel positive but pissed at the same time. For a less obscure reference, try THE PIST. Although not credited, I believe that Krang does guest vocals on track 5. (Pete & Katy) (7-song CD, lyrics included, www.incestrecords.org)

SILLA ELECTRICA – What an awesome first impression this demo has left in my head. This recording embodies all of the angst and desperation that I wish was present in every record, demo, and CD that the punk monster stits out. SILLA ELECTRICA play a really speedy form of basic stripped douwn punk that fully carries with it the punchiness of the early Spanish punk bands without sounding at all like a tribute. The vocals, which are shared by a male and female vocalist, really carry the songs and really seem to flow incredibly well with the music and add a certain brattiness that is often lacking. I can't say enough how much I like this. Get it! (Justin) (6-song CD, no lyrics included, sillaelectricapunk@gmail.com)

SIX YEAR PLAN – This defunct Deutsch band plays melodic punk with odd time signatures and sung up-front female vocals. SIX YEAR PLAN manages to keep a pretty rockin' pace on this demo but on the whole it is hard to pin down their sound. The guitar playing is somber and choppy and the semi-complex bass lines drive the songs along. At times this is sort of emo-ish in a late-'80s DC style but I hear some other influences creeping in too. I guess these tracks were supposed to be released on a split 7" that never materialized so this CD is the band's swan song, and it's a solid effort for this short-lived German obscurity. (Cissie) (4-song CD, lyrics included,myspace.com/smellthegloverecords.com)

SKIN LIKE IRON – The first thing I should note is that the packaging on this thing is fucking epic. It's three cassettes bound together in a andmade, decoupaged, cardboard "case" with a little lyric booklet. The three tapes contained within are the three demos that SKIN LIKE IRON has released in their first year of existence. The twenty songs here go through many phases that run the gamut from moody and doom-y intros, to blisteringly fast hardcore ragers, but most of these songs are mid-paced and bulldozer-iffic hardcore. The tracks are on here chronologically and as one would expect, those on tape three are the tightest, most well recorded, and find the band more centered on where they want to be. I can't help but think of fellow Bay Areans NEVER HEALED in the vocals and (usual) pacing of the songs. This set is awesome and I highly recommend seeking it out. Fuck yeah! (Justin) (20-songs, 3 cassettes, lyrics included, blacksummer.com/sli)

STYMIE – STYMIE hails from a dreary part of the country known as North Texas. Don't get me wrong I'm not trying to knock it, but North Texas is not the kind of place I like to frequent. Cowboys, corporations, and tract housing are just a few reasons to stay away. Anyway, the folks in STYMIE have circumvented the boredom of living in such a drab place by starting a punk band. I'm pretty sure the members of STYMIE are still wavering somewhere in their teens and this demo is everything adolescent punk should be. It's simple, sloppy, angry, rockin', sad, and snotty. Musically I'd place it somewhere in between SOCIAL DISTORTION and early-Lookout! It's nothing groundbreaking but it's a decent beginning for these upstarts. (Cissie) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, 1119 Frame St, Denton, TX 76209, am_7200@yahoo.com)

WILD WEEKEND – It's an all female ZEROS cover band (the one from So Cal with EL VEZ) that stays true to the original songs except for the vocals of course. Rumor has it that they are no longer just a cover band. (Pete) (7-song CD, no lyrics included, no address)

THE YOUNG – This is the fourth demo-type recording I've received from THE YOUNG but it's the first one with a full band (the other demos are home recordings featuring Han Z. on all instruments). I've liked all of THE YOUNG's previous recordings but these songs are much livelier and more complex than Hans' solo efforts. THE YOUNG is reminiscent of punk's golden era without seeming stuck in the past. They have a sound that is distinctly catchy and full of texture and depth. In contrast the vocals are full-on malevolence. The overall nature of their music is spiteful yet tuneful and I hear some melancholic undertones in a few of the songs as well. It's 2008, you want to hear a new punk band to start the year, look no further. (Cissie) (9-song CD, no lyrics included, www.myspace.com/bullshitdeluxe)

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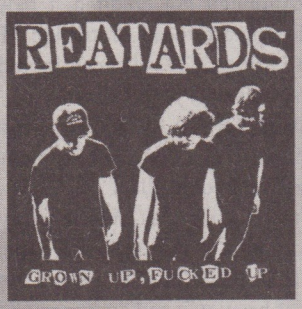

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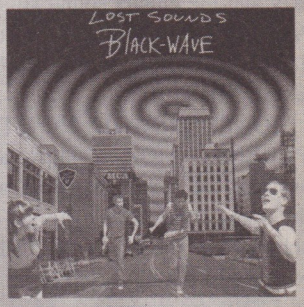

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ZINES

Send zines for review to: MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please include the following info on a separate piece of paper with your zine: postpaid price, international price, do you take trades?, size, copied or printed?, number of pages, language, mailing address, website address, email address.

Reviews by:
(AA) Ariel Awesome
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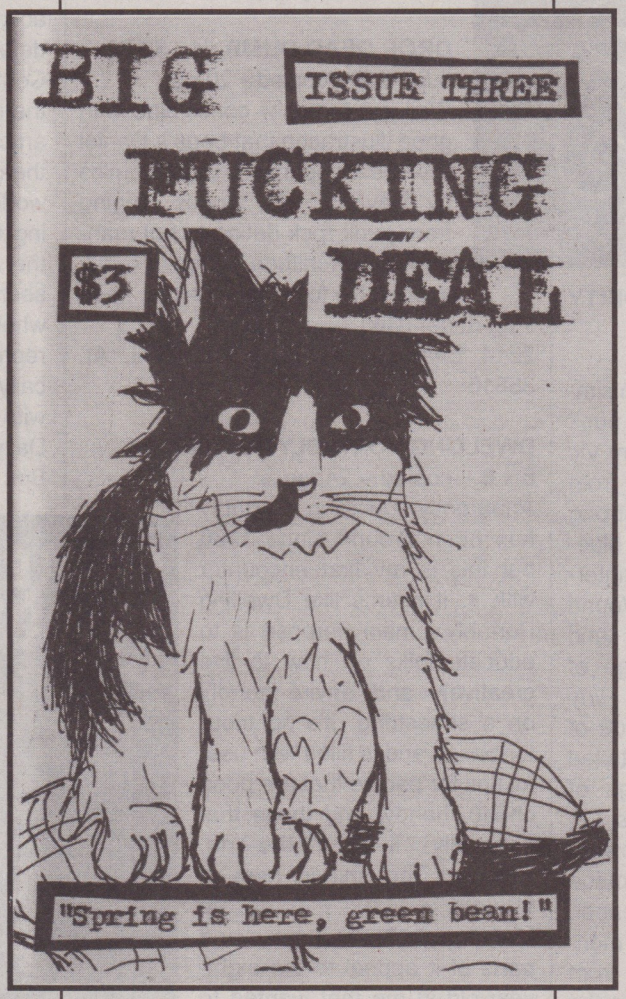
(JB) Julia Booze
(JU) Justin Briggs
(PC) Paul Curran
(AC) Arwen Curry
(MJ) Meredith Jones
(NM) Nick Mangel
(JM) Jeff Mason
(SM) Scott Miller
(MP) Mason Pince
(CR) Casey Ress
(CI) Cissie Scurlock
(DS) Dionne Stevens

AFOLK #2 / $2
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 26 pgs
I had a lot of trouble reading this zine. It seemed to be half personal/half music zine. The bands interviewed sounded lame. I liked a couple of the drawings inside, especially the comic. (MP)
Andy Folk / 175 Jefferson St. Apt. 1A / Brooklyn, NY 11206

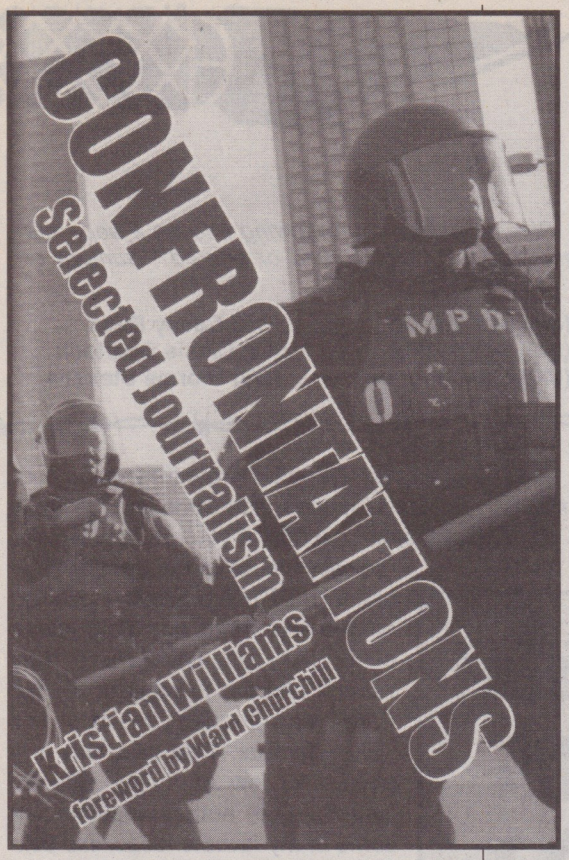
ABORT #? / $2 (free to prisoners)
Anthologies can show a different side of a writer, or editor, revealing the This issue, called "Sleepwalk," is assembled by editor Jonathan, of work by his friends and collaborators, whose bios provide a glimpse of shared punk history and projects. It took me a while longer than necessary to figure this out. I especially appreciated the overall sense of the present – it felt like the contributors were really grappling with their place in the world now, rather than romanticizing the past. And there was some real desperation, death, poverty, sickness, ennui, in here which I always find reassuring. A good collection from a productive group. (AC)
Jonathan Spies / 45 E. 7th St. #6 / New York, NY 10003

BIG FUCKING DEAL #3 / $3
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 76 pgs
A charming comic diary zine in the vein of *Clutch* and *Snakepit*. Marc has a good sense of narrative, so the zine reads like a story instead of, you know, someone's boring-ass diary. It's funny and sad and smart—all the things good writing should be. The last eight pages of the zine contain a short story called "The Found Artist," which is an excellent piece. Color me impressed. (PC)
Marc Parker / 2000 NE 42nd Ave. #221 / Portland, OR 97213



CONFRONTATIONS / $5
5.5 x 8 – printed – 88 pgs
The title refers to anarchists and radicals acting outside of electoral politics to influence corporate and state decisions; also, to communities or rallies that are attacked by police. This pamphlet collects a series of articles the editor wrote for various publications that deal with some famous fights of the early 2000s. If you are familiar with radical critiques of the Seattle WTO and Miami FTAA protests, the jailing of Free and Critter, and the Portland punk party assault (where they weren't dancing to punk at all, but Prince and the like), much of this will be familiar. That said, this is a good overview of a few different issues. The author focuses on some of my favorite ideas, like politics being based on conflict, not everyone working together for the greater good, and that the legal system more often than not will bend towards politicized ends. Ward Churchill contributes an introduction. I find that this pamphlet would be a good addition to a radical library and to help one understand the state's actions and reactions. (JM)
Tarantula Publishing & Distribution / 818 SW 3rd Ave. PMB 1237 / Portland, OR 97204 www.social-war.net/tarantula

CONSTANT STRUGGLE #1 /$?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 15 pgs
So here it is, another SoCal scene zine—clean, decent syntax, no complaints there…Issue #1 contains interviews with The Catburglars, and the folks from Blind Spot records in Portland. A Nardcore record review section and show review, oh, and an interview with Try Your Luck. I hate to give away the ending, but let's just say that all the dudes putting this together have the same top ten list, all 6 of 'em Zzzzzzzzz. (DS)
Mike Roberts / PO Box 1690 / San Juan Capistrano CA / 92673



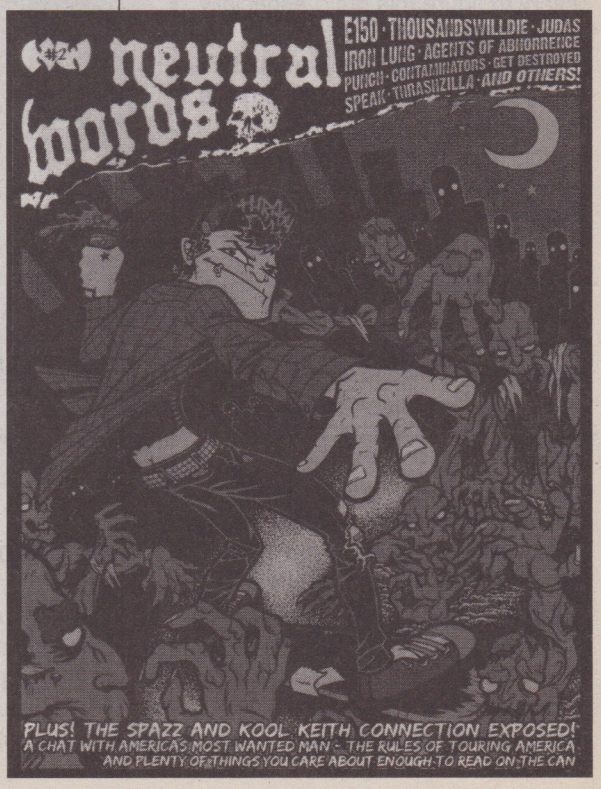
DISTORT #17 / DIRTY ALLEYS DIRTY MINDS #1.5/$?
8.5x11.75 – copied – 24 pgs
This is a split between two zines, both similar in their coverage of hardcore and punk music. The author behind *Distort*, from Vic Australia, shares some anecdotes from his trip to Cleveland and relays his strong admiration for the city's hardcore blueprint. Included are well-conducted interviews with Gag Reflex, Puncture Wound (pre-Annihilation Time), Darvocets, and Homostupids. There is also a page of Cleveland fliers from years past. *Dirty Alleys Dirty Minds* starts off their side of the split with a collection of detailed reviews of the top ten recordings of 2007—Air Conditioning *Dead Rails* LP, Psychedelic Horseshit *Magic Flowers Droned*, and Lamps among others made the list. Dry-Rot, Loser Life, Clockcleaner, and the Sick-E's share honorable mentions. "An assortment of excerpts from past interviews which won't soon see the light of day in their entirety" prefaces pieces with Sean Skeptic (Life Crisis/Think Twice) and Midnight. A reprinted interview with Red Kross from the October '84 edition of *Suburban Relapse* rounds out the issue. (SM)
DX / PO Box 239 North Carlton / Vic 3054 / Australia
distorttheworld@gmail.com

DOLL #246 / $?
8.5 x 7 – printed – 126 pages – Japanese
"30s Anniversary Rockers" edition of the premiere Japanese indie/punk rag! I guess from what I can tell this is their 30th year in publication (!!!). As usual they have a mish mash of genres ranging from indie to grind core, and lots of articles on punk/hardcore history. This one has interviews and features with Agnostic Front, Gorilla Biscuits, Revelation Records, Friction, Gall hammer (!!), Dillinger Escape Plan, Conquest for Death, Dudman, NK6 and tons more! (NM)
www.doll-mag.co.jp

DROP DEAD DUMB #1 / $2.50
8.5 x 5.5 – copied - 20 pgs
Well put together comic-zine with good illustration that begs a Daniel Clowes comparison. Eight comics by Travis T. with stories ranging from punk rock dating to hot man-on-man-enchilada-action. Really impressive for a debut issue, keep it up dude! (CR)
2214 Beasley Ave NW, Huntsville, AL 35816

DWELLING PORTABLY Dec 2007 / $1
5 x 8 – copied – 24pgs
Apparently Dwelling Portably has been around since 1980 but this is my first encounter with it. It seems like Dwelling Portably's main purpose is to educate folks on how to live creatively and enviro-friendly on a shoestring. It's contributor-based and is filled with useful tips for people that are poor, cheap, handy, and those that generally live off-the-grid. Some of the shit in here is straight up MacGuyver/Survivorman and parts of it appeal to the eight-year-old in me that wanted to be a mad scientist. A lot of the information included in Dwelling Portably would be useful to anyone but a few of the pieces were a little far-fetched—all of it is pretty neat to read anyway. I was greatly impressed by the fact that it's an eco-zine but the writing is never preachy—it sticks to facts and pure information. The last couple pages of this issue contain brief summaries of all the topics covered in several previous issues. We are also treated to two pages of zine and information pamphlet rundowns. This isn't normally my cup of tea but Dwelling Portably is one of the coolest resource type zines I've come across. (CI)
Dwelling Portably / PO Box 190-nxp / Philomath, OR 97390

EARTH FIRST! Vol. 28 #2 / $4.50
11.25 x 17 – newsprint – 31 pgs
In this issue of the "Radical Environmental Journal", *Earth First!*, the pages are packed with information and articles. This issue covers topics such as state repression in Aotearoa/New Zealand, a call for action against the DNC and RNC, the defending of the Redwoods on California's Central Coast, and the projected future of the radical environmental movement. The articles and editorial content presented by the collective, which is spread around the world, show an obvious passion for sharing the often-misrepresented opinions of the activist. Whereas the overall content seems to lean to a leftist crowd as a whole, the red and black ideology is well represented and not necessarily rhetorically written just for those already involved with active anarchism. (SM)
Daily Planet Publishing / Earth First! / PO Box 3023 / Tucson, AZ 85702)



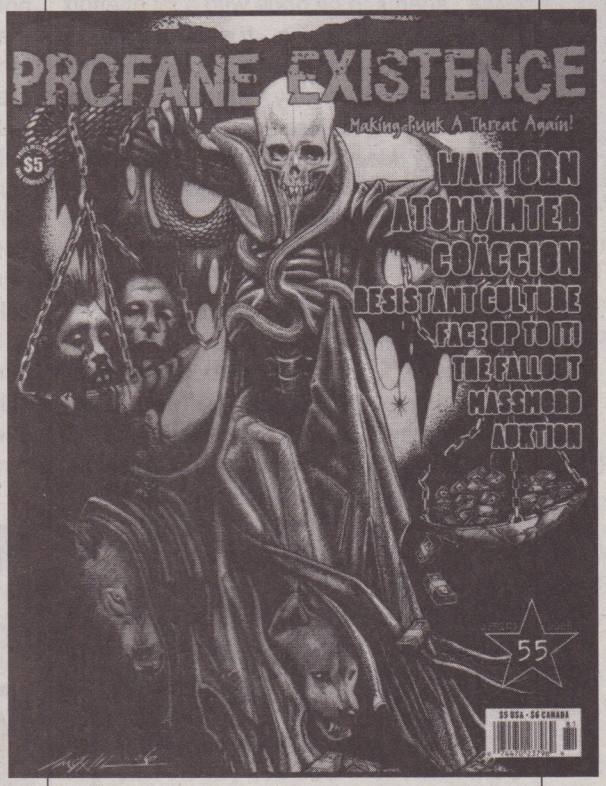
EAVES OF ASS #6 / $3
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 38 pgs
Here we have a very well written and thoughtful zine that you could easily get lost in for awhile. This is the first issue of *Eaves of Ass* that tackles music and they do it well. The author made a conscious decision not to include band names, which I think is cool. Especially because this zine was written in Oakland, so I find myself guessing what the fuck he's talking about. I feel like people only pick up zines these days if there is a band they like on the cover. I think it's totally admirable to leave that shit out. (MP)
Craven Rock / 1627 16th St. / Oakland, CA 94607

FLUFFER #? / **UGLY CUTIES** #? / $1
5.5 x 4.0 – copied – 12 pgs
Random disturbing drawings that press my definition of abstract art. I'm sure some really arty people get it, but I don't. (NM)
www.loopdistro.com

FRANTIC CITY #1 / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 34 pages
Though *MRR* has reviewed a zine by the name of *Frantic City Fanzine* in the past, that was, in fact, an entirely different series authored by the same Cherry Boy on the topic of late-'70s punk and power pop. There were three issues of that series (issues 0, 00 and 000). Cherry Boy is this time starting anew by using this fresh zine titled *Frantic City* #1 to take a look at punk and power pop from the late-'70s through to the present. He claims that he becomes erect when he sees the list of bands that has been interviewed for this issue: Milk & Cookies, Rip Offs, Big Balls & the Great White Idiot, Guitar Wolf, Aggravation, Gee Strings, Creteens, Raydios, Flying Over, and Negative Waves. This Frenchman also prints best of lists entailing what he's been listening to lately and shows he has attended. Lucky for us, he's funny enough to make this an OK read. (JD)
Frantic City Entertainment Services / 31 rue Arvède Barine / 17000 La Rochelle / France

GHOST PINE #11 / $3 ppd
5.5 X 4.25 – copied – 48 pgs
If the "perzine" label usually stops you in your tracks, consider taking a chance on *Ghost Pine*. This is well written and original. It consists of short autobiographical vignettes that are riveting glimpses at Jeff's life, each one alternating between funny and sad. I enjoyed the shortness of each piece, and how his writing gives you just a taste of the moment, but now I'm sitting here wanting more. (AA)
Jeff Miller / PO Box 42017 / RPO Jeanne-Mance / Montreal, QC / H2W-2T3 / Canada

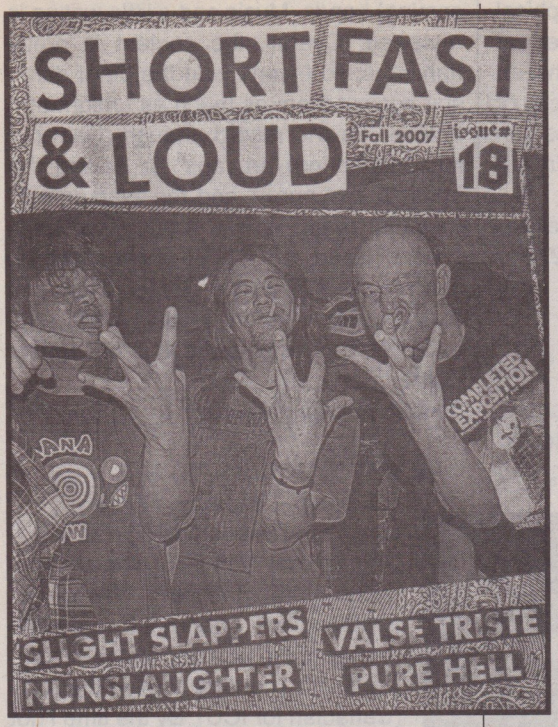
NEUTRAL WORDS #2 / $?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 52 pgs
Phoenix, I wish you would die. I eagerly await the day when the Colorado no longer quenches your thirst, pools, and fucking golf courses. At least this zine is kind of good. It looks hell of rad, with a typical (but fine) illustrated cover, plenty to read, decent photos, and small ads from small labels. It's packed with interviews of newer bands, including the Contaminators, Speak, Punch, Get Destroyed, Thousands Will Die, E150 (those dudes will be doing a new band soon), and both parts of the Iron Lung/Agents of Abhorrence tour. By today's zine's standards, these are pretty good. There are a lot of columns, which vary in quality, some of which are just reprints of web logs. The guy behind this zine does (small) shows in Phoenix, so he is tapped into many up and coming (or just coming) bands. Music and a little writing is reviewed. Overall, the content is pretty righteous, so I won't hold the bit of dumb shit against them as much as I might otherwise—for the record, though, I am not into "punch(ing) art fags" or "taking the pussy out of punk," and the Warkrime 7" isn't that great. This is pretty good for a second issue, so I hope they continue, and maybe edit a little stricter. They ask that you email before mailing them anything, as the postal address is not stable. (JM)
neutralwordz@gmail.com



ONE WAY TICKET #5 / $2
5.5 x 4.25 – copied – 68 pgs
One Way Ticket starts off well with a biographical sketch of son-of-anarchists-mathematician Alexander Grothendieck. After that it veers into a story of the authors' friend becoming ill and spending time in the ACU (Canadian for ICU). By the time I got to the traveling-on-trains section I pretty much lost interest. *One Way Ticket* wasn't terrible, and if you *really* like the personal/travel genre of zines you might enjoy this. For me I think I'm going to retire from reviewing zines like this. (CR)
onewayticketzine@gmail.com

PROFANE EXISTENCE #55 / $5
8.5 x 11 - printed - 82 Pages
Pretty amazing to think that *Profane Existence* has made it to #55 and right when you think they might have ended, Dan and cohorts come back and thwack ya in the head reminding you they are here! *Profane Existence* has a slick new look with a full color cover, always classy art, and now with a CD! This issue features Wartorn, Atomvinter, Coaccion, Resistant Culture, Massmord, Auktion, and all the usual reviews, news, updates, etc that you need from the world's primo anarcho punk rag. (NM)
Profance Existence / PO Box 18051 / Minneapolis, MN 55418

Q FOR TREASON #11 / $3 US/Can, email first for trades
This is a dry, blow-by-blow account of the editor's three-week--long bike trip through British Columbia. If you are planning such a trip, in Canada or elsewhere, I don't doubt that this will be tremendously useful. As a piece of work standing on its own, **it**



lacks appeal. No illustrations, for example. It's more of a manual for an ambitious feat. (AC)
Reece / 2028 E. 12th Ave. / Vancouver, BC V5N 2A8
qfortreason@gmail.com

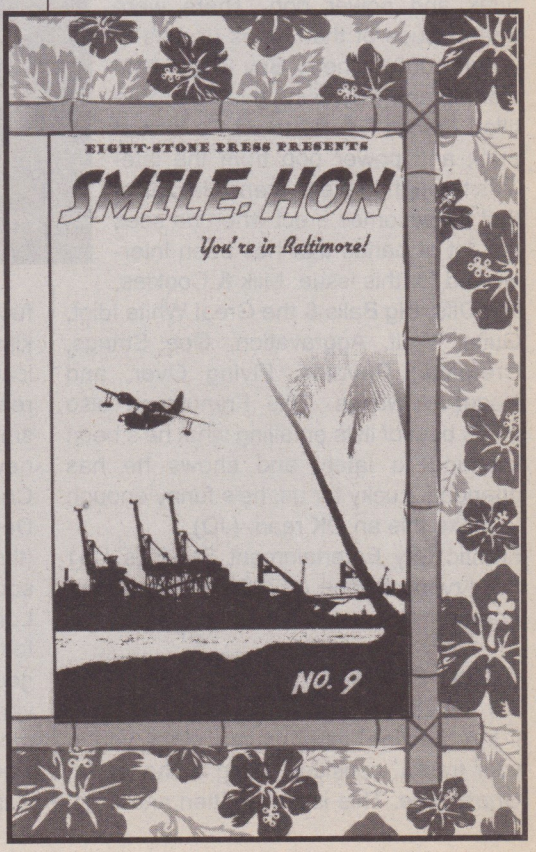
RYAN FOERSTER #1 / FREE w/ SASE or trade
8 x 11 – copied – 48 pgs
This zine is awful. It's poorly printed, which cuts off some of the artwork, and none of the writing is well done or worthwhile. The author has dedicated a page to a joke about raping a 14-year-old girl, which to me is never funny, and never OK. Some of his drawings aren't offensive. One in particular of a woman lying spread eagle I found very lewd. This imagery only serves to objectify the female figure. The only part of this zine that was entertaining on any level was a project the author did on emails, where an email concerning getting drunk and stoned at a birthday party was sent to numerous friends and family members known to the recipient. However, it was more stupid than funny. (MJ)
Ryan Foerster / 184 Willow Lane / Newmarket, Ontario / Canada / L3Y6R8

SCENE NOT HERD #2 / $4 or trade
8.5 x 11 – copied – 52pgs + CDR
Scene Not Herd is standard fare for a music zine. The content is comprised of columns, interviews, and reviews. The music coverage leans almost solely towards pop punk. At times it comes off like Razorcake-lite. The columns touch on fairly basic topics such as baseball, television, and food. There's a section titled "Punk Rock 101" where the editor relays his personal "dos and don'ts" of punk. Bands/people interviewed include the Methadones, the Gruesome Boys, Streetside Prophet, and Chad Riley (organizer of a Lance Hahn benefit compilation). As a bonus Scene Not Herd comes with a mix CD for all you pop punk lovers. I don't listen to much pop punk so I can't comment on the quality of the CD...but the zine seems to be done with a lot of effort and enthusiasm. If you're a fan of the genre that mixes pop with punk then I'd highly suggest tracking Scene Not Herd down. (CI)
Eric Hazen / 1623 8th Avenue Apt. 2 / Longview, WA 98632
scenenotherdzine@homail.com
www.myspace.com/scenenotherdzine

SHORT FAST & LOUD #18 / $?
8.5 – 11 – printed – 104 pgs
I will list my favorite things about this magazine in ascending order: The review policy asks potentials to re-read the title of the magazine, also, reviews are anonymous because "no punk's opinion is more important than another's," the Pure Hell retrospective (although the questions are longer than the answers), the section called Gimme 5 on worst tour stories (some are really sad, watch out), the distro review/guide in David Finn's guest column, and everything Ami Lawless writes. Damn, she is a bad ass (when was the last time *you* drank rum on a volcano?) Interviewed herein: Slight Slappers, Valse Triste, and Nunslaughter. I feel like mentioning that all the photos in this issue are from Japan and fucking awesome. (JB)
Short Fast & Loud / 225 Lincoln Ave. / Cotati, CA 94931
sixweeksrecords@comcast.net

SMILE HON, YOU'RE IN BALTIMORE #9 / $3
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 48 pgs
I lived in Baltimore for a summer. It was sticky hot, and full of rats. Once on a clear day I saw a rat fly through the air and catch a bird. It made me think that any bizarre thing could happen in Baltimore, and every story I've ever heard about that city has confirmed my suspicions. This Baltimore-centric zine is chalk full of good stories by people who know how to write, and lucky for me there are eight other issues to hunt down. (AA)
Willam P. Tandy c/o Eight-Stone Press / PO Box 11064 / Baltimore, MD 21212

THE STUDENT INSURGENT #19.3 / Free or $15 for a one year subscription
12 x 14.5 – printed – 27 pages
This is a lefty rag made by students that attend the University of Oregon campus in Eugene. Environmental, immigration, political, and other social justice issues are addressed throughout the paper in fact-filled editorials. Some of the writings are persuasive and attempt to expose readers to the appeals of veganism and anarchy. It also features a world news sections, some creative writing, and a local calendar. There is an article about how music is good for you and a healthy form of expression. This issue also contains a color photo spread featuring the middle of a lawn baring flags that represent the number of people that have died in the war in Iraq, Overall, this is a typical radical student paper and fine exercise for people newly entered into the world of political



awareness and thought. (JD)
EMU / Suite One / University of Oregon / Eugene, OR 97403-1228

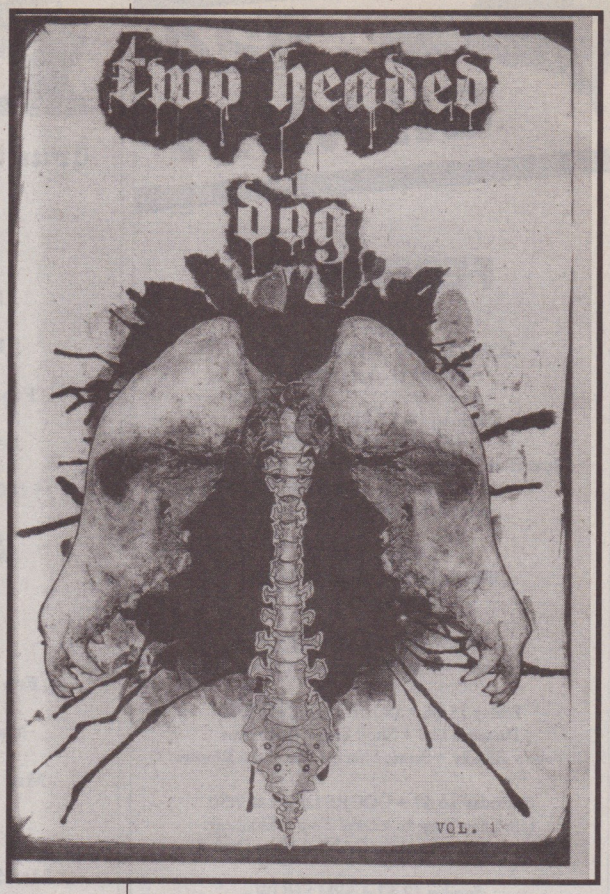
STYLES AND CHAINSAW'S FUNZINE
#2 / $?
8 x 11 – copied – 44 pgs
The theme of this issue is Jon's trip to New Zealand with his friend Chainsaw. He's included diary entries, poems, and artwork about NZ and their trip. Jon and Chainsaw, as well as their friends provided the content. Jon put his anthropology degree to good use for this zine, detailing stories told to him by some of the rural folk of NZ he met on his trip, which are really neat. I also really enjoy Jon's doodles—they remind me of a more rushed version of the *New York Thrash* comp cover, but containing more '80s skater dudes. The other thing that rules about this zine is the scams Jon and his friends can get way with, like buying rafts, using them, and making up some outrageous lie to get full refund afterwards. So much more creative than stealing, and makes a better story. Jon's illustrated breakdown of hitchhiking is really funny too, and informative to those of us who just stay put, or are too scared to jump into a stranger's car. This trip sounds like it was totally radical, and I wish I could have taken part in an adventure like this. A fun read. (MJ)
Jon Shade / 625 Ashbury Ave. Apt. #4 / San Francisco, CA 94117
scfunzine@yahoo.com

THIRDXPARTY December 2007 / $?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 8 pgs
I am pretty stoked on this zine. It is comprised of the editor's opinions and some photographs. (Most of the photos are taken by ladies.) The straight edge vegan guy who writes this talks mostly about being in his thirties, why motherfuckers break edge, the problems in trying to hook it up hetero-style (that is to say, to date) when you're considerably older than the women in the scene, and the bands that got him started on punk. I'm real glad to see a short zine full of opinions worth reading and pictures of newer bands. There ain't been an issue of this for years—I hope the next one comes much sooner. The only thing missing is a postal address. (JM)
www.thirdxparty.com

THE TROUBLE WITH NORMAL
#85/86 / $3.25
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 80 pgs
The Trouble With Normal has been cranking it out since '92, quite a feat. This is like a blammo double issue. The ghost of D Boon is singing to me while he reads over my shoulder. Typos make him uneasy as well, especially on the cover, but besides that I say kudos for the hard work; it shows. I wasn't nuts about the show reviews in issue #85. If one were familiar with more of the featured bands, she or he would probably have a greater appreciation for the effort. What I can say is that the collection of features from past issues, this is the #86 part, makes for some good toilet time. Jello and Mike Watt, Only Crime, and lots of photos and music reviews, as well as early pieces about police harassment and feminism proved worthy. (DS)
Boone / PO Box 1444 / Columbia, MO / 65205-1444

TURNING THE TIDE Vol. 21 #1 / free
11 x 17 – newsprint – 8 pgs
Subtitled "Journal of Anti-Racist Action, Research & Education, Decolonization, Demilitarization, Democratization," you can pretty much tell what you're getting into here. Articles on the Black Riders Party, a neo Black Panther-esque group, as well as pieces on the plight of indigenous people around the world, and two book reviews by Mumia Abu-Jamal himself. (PC)
Anti-Racist Action Publishers / PO Box 1055 / Culver City, CA 90232

TWO HEADED DOG #1 / 4 Euros ppd or trade
6 x 8 – copied – 76 pgs
This Irish zine is a really good read and there is so much information sandwiched between these covers that it ain't even funny. Inside you'll find an interesting and very well written and thought-out piece on preparing for and surviving the inevitable industrial collapse, dealing with climate change, and it's relation to punk. We're treated to an interview with ABC Weapons about their feelings regarding their land of Australia. Other interviews include activist



and tribal elder, Uncle Kev, and Aboriginal rights advocate, Ringo, about their struggles with the uranium mining industry and fighting for the rights of their people and land. Finally the second half of the zine is mostly dedicated to dogs (yes, the animal) and the roles that they have played within mythology and human history. As I stated in the first sentence of this review, the writing in *Two Headed Dog* is of the highest quality and it's all framed by equally well-done ink drawings and collages that drive the dark feel of the subject matter home that much harder. Oh, and how could I forget that it also comes with a four-way split CD featuring Still Birth, Carosah, Putrefaction, and Divisions Ruin—all of whom are of the bleak and crusty heavy hardcore variety. Do yourself a favor and seek this zine out. (JU)
Eric / 1, McKee Park / Blackhorse Ave / Dublin 7 / IRELAND
direwolf@riseup.net

WHAT MATTERS MOST #1 / $3
A good start, flavored mostly by Ann Arbor, a little young and goofy but fine for a crosstown bus ride. (AC)
PO Box 23101 / Stanley, KS 66283
http://lowellfletcher.blogspot.com/

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more info T.B.A.

Sunday 10 $6 •5PM SHOW
La Plebe • Carnal Knowledge (NY) • Zomo

Friday 15 $6 • DOORS OPEN @ 7:30
Parasites Go! • Skull Stomp • Rukkus
Follow Blindly • Septic Shock • Bay Area Ripperz

Saturday 16 $7 • DOORS OPEN @ 7:30
Life Long Tragedy • Steel Trap • Lionheart
All Teeth • Gravemaker (CAN) • Maya Over Eyes

Sunday 17 $7 • 5PM SHOW
Shook Ones (WA) • Nothington • Said Radio
Hour of the Wolf (AZ) • Comadre

Friday 22 $7
DOORS OPEN @ 7:30
Stormcrow • Sanctum (WA) • Warfair (AZ)
Worldeater • You Die

Saturday 23 $8
DOORS OPEN @ 7:00
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Drain The Sky • OvO (Italy)
The Better To See You With (OR)

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Internal Affairs (L.A.) • Trash Talk (L.A.) • Red Handed

MARCH

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Killing The Dream • Soul Control (RI)
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Feb 24 2008 - Rabid Records
Tarzana, California

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St. Louis, Missouri

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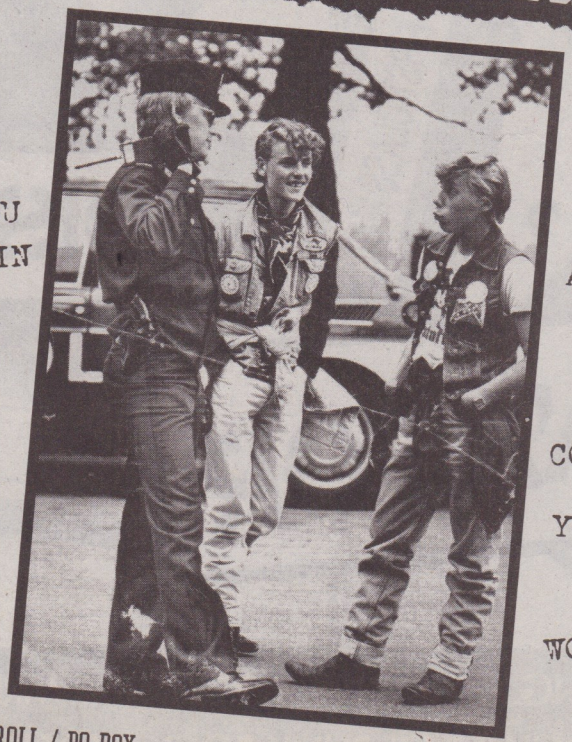

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